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# THE EFFECT OF GROUP IDENTITY ON MEMORIES OF PAST CONFLICTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

REZARTA BILALI

Submitted to the Graduate School of the  
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

September 2009

Psychology  
Social Psychology  
Psychology of Peace and Violence Concentration

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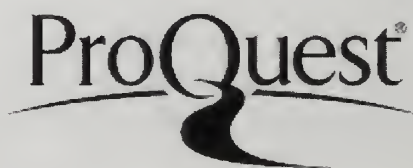
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# THE EFFECT OF GROUP IDENTITY ON MEMORIES OF PAST CONFLICTS

A Dissertation Presented

by

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# THE EFFECT OF GROUP IDENTITY ON MEMORIES OF PAST CONFLICTS


A Dissertation Presented

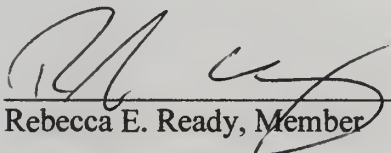
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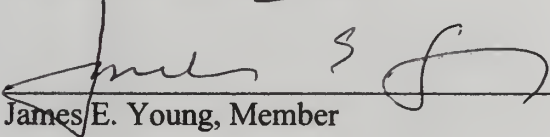
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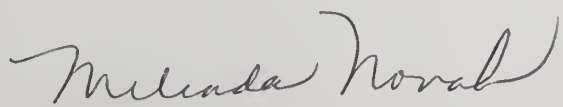
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## DEDICATION

Per nanen dhe baben

For my mother and my father

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to express my gratitude to many individuals that contributed at various stages, from the preparatory work to the writing of the final draft of the dissertation, thus making this project possible.

First, I want to thank my dissertation advisors, Linda Tropp and Nilanjana Dasgupta, who provided guidance in every step of the research process. They helped formulate ideas, provided suggestions on study designs, and read and commented on several drafts of the dissertation. This final product embeds their guidance and feedback. Here, I also thank committee members Rebecca Ready and James Young who read drafts of the dissertation and provided thoughtful comments.

Many friends and colleagues helped translate and adapt the instrument to Turkish and French, and assisted me with data collection.

Güngör Özer translated the Turkish-Armenian questionnaire and parts of the Turkish-Kurdish questionnaire to Turkish. He also helped with data collection through his access to Turkish student populations at various U.S. universities and through his connections with students of Kurdish origin. In addition, I shared with Güngör the excitement and problems during this research. I thank him for bearing with me and for providing moral support during this process.

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When time came to collect data, many friends and colleagues made possible the recruitment of a large number of participants. First, I want to thank Prof. Sibel Arkonaç and other members of the psychology department at Istanbul University who responded very quickly to my inquiry and welcomed me at their office at Istanbul University. After a very nice conversation and good Turkish coffee, they very generously agreed to distribute my questionnaires to their students in psychology classes at Istanbul University. Without their help, it would have been impossible for me to have such a large sample size of Turkish participants. I also appreciate the help of faculty members at Bilgi University and Doğuş University in Istanbul who offered time from their classes to conduct my research.

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help me access student populations. When time came to collect the ‘real’ data presented here, I trusted Fabrice Gisanganya (with whom I had worked in a previous project) and his experience with research in Burundi to recruit participants and handle data collection. I was happy that he agreed to assist me in my research. Johan Deflander helped arrange financial matters in Burundi and Esta de Fossard carried the data from Bujumbura to D.C. and made sure that they arrived safely to Massachusetts.

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Finally, I want to express my deep appreciation to more than 500 individuals who participated in this research and shared their thoughts with me.



## ABSTRACT

### THE EFFECT OF GROUP IDENTITY ON MEMORIES OF PAST CONFLICTS

SEPTEMBER 2009

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The present research examined how group members construe events of conflict and violence in which their ingroup was involved and shed light on the relationship between ingroup identification and those construals of intergroup conflict. I proposed that construals of intergroup conflict vary along two main dimensions, attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm. Drawing on social identity theory, in three survey studies, I derived and tested hypotheses regarding cross-group and within-group variations in these dimensions. The first study examined the influence of ingroup identification (identification with Turkish nationality) on individuals' construals of a historical period characterized by intergroup violence (Armenian-Turkish conflict). Study 2 sought to extend this investigation in a different conflict context (Turkish-Kurdish conflict) by examining construals of a recent conflict which occurred during respondents' lifetime. Furthermore, it examined whether the influence of ingroup identification on construals of conflict varies as a function of one's group membership (Turks vs. Kurds). Study 3 extended the prior findings to examine whether individual differences in the



strength of ingroup (Hutu vs. Tutsi) identification are an important predictor of construals of conflict in a context of ongoing extreme violence between groups (ethnic conflict in Burundi).

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Perceptions of history and collective memories have an important role in maintaining and exacerbating intergroup conflicts (e.g., Asmal, Asmal, & Roberts, 1996; Devine-Wright, 2001). Each side in a conflict has a different construal of the origins and development of the conflict, which in turn have a very strong impact on group members' current perceptions of the conflict and prospects for its resolution. Different historical accounts of conflict serve the needs of each group (Cairns & Roe, 2003) by justifying outbreaks of violence and delegitimizing the opponent (Bar-Tal, 2003). In addition, historical events have been a powerful tool of manipulation by leaders and elites to justify collective action including revenge and other forms of aggression (Berlin, 1979; Mack, 1983; Ramanathapillai, 2006). As such, perceptions of past conflict inform understanding of the present as well as expectations for the future. Consequently, understanding how groups construe events of the past is very important for understanding the dynamics of an intergroup conflict, and promises to shed light on conditions that may promote de-escalation and perhaps even resolution.

In recent years social psychologists have become interested in the study of people's perceptions of their groups' or nations' troubled histories (e.g., Branscombe & Doosje, 2004; Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998). This research has examined people's reactions toward descriptions of historical events involving their in-group's wrong-doing. However, with a few exceptions (e.g., Cairns & Lewis, 1999; Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997; Sahdra & Ross, 2007), there has been little research attempting to predict which psychological factors modulate individuals' construal of

historical events. What are the specific ways in which individuals (mis)construe conflicts between groups? When are they more prone to biases in construals? What attributions do they make for past incidents where their ingroup was either the perpetrator or the victim? How do they perceive harm perpetrated vs. harm suffered by their group? These types of research questions have not received much empirical attention; yet they are important to investigate because the way people construe past group conflicts is likely to influence intergroup relations in the present including people's support for current policies toward relevant outgroups (Liu, Wilson, McLure, & Higgins, 1999).

Using social identity theory as the guiding framework, the current research seeks to address this gap in this research literature by examining the conditions under which intergroup conflicts are differentially construed by social groups. Three questions drive this research. First, how do group members construe violent intergroup conflicts involving their ingroup? To address this question, I examine three dimensions in which construals of past conflicts vary, namely, attributions of responsibility, perceived severity of harm, and conflict framing. Second, does the degree of ingroup identification influence individuals' interpretations of these conflicts? Third, what is the role of different types of ingroup identification (ethnic vs. national) in these construals?

### 1.1 Construals of Historical Events Related to Group Conflict

Various academic disciplines such as sociology, anthropology or history study remembering and forgetting in society. Most of these approaches focus on the shared or common representations of collective events. Although they investigate similar phenomena, they use different names including "collective representations" (Durkheim, 1912/1947), "collective memories" (Halbwachs, 1950/1980), or "social memories"

(Bartlett, 1932/1950). “Collective memory” is different from the conventional use of the word “memory” in psychological research. Whereas memory in psychology refers to *individuals’* recollections of past events that they have *experienced personally* (or at least think they have experienced), collective memory refers to *interpretations or construals* of past group or societal events that individuals self-report *without necessarily having personally experienced those events*. In the present research I will be referring to interpretations and construals of collective events such as intergroup conflict rather than actual personal memories of events.

Construals of collective events can be the result of a combination of personal experiences and societal influence such as media accounts, commemorations, history books and other social constructions (Bar-Tal, 2000; Schumann, Akiyama, & Knauper, 1999). Depending on political and ideological circumstances of the society of which they are part (e.g., Butler, 1989; Ascherson, 1995; Schudson, 1995), people have some choice regarding the information to which they attend although this choice maybe constrained (Sahdra & Ross, 2007). Factors such as the freedom of information (Schudson, 1995), the degree of disagreement about different interpretations of the past, the number of competing claims upon the past, and the structure of society (liberal versus authoritarian) (Ascherson, 1995) are external factors that constrain individuals’ construal of historical events of their group’s past.

Social scientists have investigated the *shared* or *collective* representations of group conflict by studying common narratives, social accounts, historical books, and media. The narratives and societal beliefs of the past develop over time and provide a coherent view of the origins and development of the conflict (Devine-Wright, 2003).



Collective memory of a conflict has some basis in the actual events, but it is biased and distorted such that it serves the group's or society's needs at the present (Bar-Tal, 2007). While at the societal level the writing of history is a political decision based on group's needs and interests or an intellectual endeavor in academia (Blight, 2001; Gillis, 1994; Irwin-Zarecka, 1994; Schudson, 1995; Olick & Robbins, 1998), it is the individual who does the 'remembering' (Bartlett, 1932). Despite the shared nature of these beliefs, group members often exhibit differences in their interpretations of past collective events of intergroup conflict. Understanding the conditions and processes that lead to differential interpretations of the past across and within groups is important as it might provide insights for successful interventions.

## 1.2 The Role of Group Membership and Ingroup Identification on Construals of Conflict

Bartlett (1932) was the first to suggest that there is a relationship between group membership and remembering. Research on group processes and intergroup relations has demonstrated that categorizing oneself as a group member leads to ingroup favoritism (Brewer, 1979). For instance, Howard and Rothbart (1980) found that categorizing participants into arbitrary groups (overestimators vs. underestimators) influenced memories of the ingroup's and outgroup's behavior. Participants expected ingroup members to engage in more favorable behaviors than outgroup members, which in turn led them to remember more favorable behaviors and fewer unfavorable behaviors when these behaviors were associated with ingroup rather than outgroup members. Consistent with laboratory research on group memories, a few studies with groups in real world contexts found similar patterns regarding construals and interpretations of the ingroup's

conflictual past. For example, Liu et al. (1999) examined *how* ethnic groups (Maoris and Pakehas in New Zealand) in conflict construe historical events. Free recall of the most important historical events in New Zealand's history, individuals' attributions about important events, and evaluation of the consequences of these events were assessed for both groups. Results demonstrated that participants showed ingroup favoritism in perceptions of history, both in terms of which events were recalled as most important, as well as in their construal of these events (Liu et al., 1999). These results are consistent with social identity theory's claims that group members strive to maintain a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and therefore make ingroup-serving attributions in recalling the group's past and historical events (Doosje & Branscombe, 2003). Along these lines, Baumeister and Hastings (1997) argue that the drive to maintain a positive self-image leads to errors and distortions of events of the past that portray the in-group positively, whereas errors that portray the in-group negatively are rare.

The above mentioned research has focused on the ways in which mere membership in a social group influences construals of group-related events. However, it has not examined whether individual differences in the strength of ingroup identification, rather than objective group membership, is an important explanatory variable accounting for additional variation in construals of past intergroup conflicts. According to social identity theory, not all group members are equally attached to their group; individuals to whom group identity is important ought to be more motivated to maintain a positive image of their group, which in turn should lead to endorsing more ingroup favorable memories of the past (Sahdra & Ross, 2007). Based on this, it is expected that ingroup identification will be related to *how* one's ingroup's violent conflictual past is construed

and interpreted. So far, only two published articles have examined variants of this issue, but each has a drawback. Liu et al. (1999) assessed how historical events (i.e., attribution of responsibility; the extent of negative consequences) were construed by members of two groups (Pakeha and Maori respectively); however they did not measure the strength of participants' ingroup identification. Sahdra and Ross (2007) investigated the relationship between the strength of ingroup identification and recollections of intergroup conflict (i.e., frequency of past events recalled freely; emotional reactions toward such events). However, they did not examine how those events were construed by members of both groups in conflict to test for differences in construal as a function of group membership as well as strength of ingroup identification. The current research aims to fill this gap by investigating whether members of different groups who also vary in ingroup identification will construe and interpret violent intergroup conflict differently. In support of this idea, past research found that people are driven to maintain a positive group image, therefore group members are generally expected to make more errors in recalling events that portray the ingroup positively and fewer errors in recalling events that portray the ingroup negatively (Baumeister & Hastings, 1997).

### 1.3 What Are the Dimensions along which Construals of Intergroup Conflict Vary?

From a social psychological perspective, sources such as selective attention, fabrication, exaggeration, blaming the enemy, or blaming the circumstances (Baumeister & Hastings, 1997) may be useful to understand how group members construe events of group's past differently. For example, research on people's reactions toward ingroup's wrongdoing has demonstrated that people often minimize the severity of the harm inflicted (Branscombe & Miron, 2004), blame or make situational attributions (rather



than ingroup attributions) to explain the negative actions (Doosje & Branscombe, 2003), or place responsibility for the harm done on the victims (Herbert & Dunkel-Schetter, 1992). In a similar vein, Bandura (1999, 2002) describes related mechanisms by which individuals accept and justify violence and inhumane conduct on others. These mechanisms include: (1) moral justification of the act, (2) denial, displacement, or diffusion of responsibility, (3) disregarding or minimizing the negative consequences, and (4) attribution of blame to the victim or circumstances. Although originally developed to describe processes at the individual level, these mechanisms have been shown to be applicable to group members' judgments about their group's conduct in situations of war and military interventions (see Cohrs & Moschner, 2002; Cohrs, Maes, Moschner, & Kielman, 2003; Grussendorf, McAlister, Sandstroem, Udd, & Morrison, 2002). Variation in the use of these strategies might account for differential interpretations of the ingroup's conflictual past. Taken together, these strategies vary along two dimensions: attributions of responsibility for the harm inflicted (e.g., blaming the victim or the circumstances, denial of or displacement of responsibility), and perceived severity of harm (e.g., minimization of the negative consequences of ingroup's harmdoing). I elaborate on these two dimensions below.

### 1.3.1 Attributions of responsibility

Based on the mechanisms identified by Bandura (1999) and Baumeister and Hastings (1997) three targets of attributions can be readily identified in intergroup contexts: the ingroup, the outgroup, and the situational factors (i.e., third parties or circumstances). In this context, ingroup favoritism hypothesis postulates that group members would make fewer ingroup attributions, but more outgroup and external

attributions for the conflict. Situational attributions can serve as mitigating factors that tone down the responsibility for ingroup's harmdoing (Bandura, 1999; Baumeister & Hastings, 1997).

Research on attributions of responsibility at the intergroup level has primarily focused on the ultimate attribution error (Pettigrew, 1979) which suggests that group members make situational attributions for negative acts carried out by an ingroup member, but they make dispositional attributions if these negative acts are carried out by an outgroup member (e.g., Duncan, 1976, Hewstone & Ward, 1985, Rosenberg & Wolfsfeld, 1977, Stephan, 1977). In these studies an ingroup or outgroup member is generally depicted as responsible for a negative or a positive behavior, therefore the question is not who is responsible for the behavior, but whether the behavior is attributed to dispositional or situational influences. The emphasis is on evaluating the individual who carried out the negative behavior, rather than on construing the event. Additionally, with few exceptions (e.g. Doosje & Branscombe, 2003), studies in this area have examined attributions for a specific behavior of a specific member of the ingroup or outgroup, rather than global attributions made for the negative behavior of the ingroup as a whole. As such, despite this literature on intergroup attributions, our understanding of attributions of responsibility in intergroup conflict contexts remains limited.

Threat, fear, and delegitimization of the other in a violent conflict increases perceptions of the adversary as extremely threatening (Bar-Tal, 2007). Groups sometimes engage in defensive violence or preemptive strikes to protect themselves from the outgroup (Staub, 1998). These violent actions by the ingroup might be perceived merely as a response to the outgroup's provocation (Bandura, 1990; Staub, 1989). Research on

interpersonal conflict (Brown & Tedeschi, 1976; Kane, Joseph, & Tedeschi, 1976) and intergroup conflict (Dodge & Coie, 1987; Wohl & Reeder, 2004) has demonstrated that retaliation in response to provocation (imagined or real) is considered as justifiable by the individual or the group that is provoked. Even if the ingroup is viewed as responsible for the violent acts, the ingroup's positive image is not threatened if these acts were perceived to be in response to the outgroup's negative behavior (Branscombe & Miron, 2004). Intractable intergroup conflicts are generally characterized by cycles of violence in which each group harms the other at different times during the course of the conflict. Each group views their violent actions as legitimate while blaming the other group for provoking the violence.

Based on this, I propose a distinction between two types of responsibility in intergroup conflict contexts: assigning responsibility for the instigation versus assigning responsibility for the consequences of conflict. The first refers to responsibility for starting or provoking the events, whereas the latter refers to responsibility for carrying out the harmdoing in the course of the conflict, thus inflicting harm and suffering. If both sides have harmed each other in the conflict, each group is likely to perceive their acts of violence as a response to threat or provocation by the outgroup. Perceiving the ingroup as less responsible for instigating the conflict and perceiving the outgroup as the instigator of the conflict should provide moral justification for ingroup's violent acts. Therefore, groups might engage in competition about 'who started it first.' This motivation to reduce one's responsibility for the instigation of the events might manifest in individuals perceiving their ingroup as less responsible for instigating a conflict than for its

consequences, and it might also lead to perceiving the outgroup as more responsible for instigating the conflict than for its consequences.

### 1.3.2 Severity of Harm

Ingroup suffering and victimization are central to group members' beliefs about conflicts in which their groups are involved (Bar-Tal, 1998, 2007). Each group in a conflict portrays itself as the victim and focuses on its own suffering and victimhood (Nadler & Saguy, 2004; Noor, Brown, & Prentice, 2008). Portraying oneself as a victim might serve to legitimize current negative actions against outgroup members (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008) as well as to establish the ingroup's morality and legitimacy for past negative acts. At the societal level, groups attempt in various ways to minimize the harm inflicted by their ingroup. For instance, Pratto and Glasford (2008) have noted that in order to diminish the harm done, institutionally or collectively, sometimes groups do not officially and accurately count the war victims who are considered the enemy. Media research (e.g., Fishman & Marvin, 2003) has shown that representations of the suffering are highly biased to favor the ingroup, in terms of exclusively focusing on the suffering experienced by the ingroup and downplaying the suffering experienced by the outgroup. Similarly, at an individual level, Bandura (1999) has found that people tend to minimize the consequences of their negative acts, or disregard and discredit relevant evidence to the contrary.

Some research on intergroup conflict has examined beliefs about the ingroup's victimhood (Bar-Tal, 2000) and their effects on various intergroup outcomes (Vollhardt, 2009). However, the extent of harm individuals perceive to be inflicted on the ingroup vs. outgroup, and within-group variations in these perceptions have not been investigated.



From a social identity perspective, the motivation to perceive one's ingroup in a positive light is expected to create individual differences in perceived severity of harm inflicted on the ingroup and the outgroup. The desire to portray the ingroup as the victim, that is, to gain legitimacy in the conflict, might lead group members to exclusively focus on the harm inflicted on the ingroup and to downplay the harm inflicted on the outgroup. As such, a stronger ingroup identification should encourage group members to perceive more harm inflicted on the ingroup but less harm inflicted on the outgroup.

### 1.1 The Goals of the Present Research

The present research aimed to investigate how group members construe events of intergroup conflict and violence in which their ingroup was involved. As identified above, two dimensions that contribute to differential construals of intergroup conflict include attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm. This research investigates these construals by examining cross-group and within-group variations in these two dimensions. Based on predictions derived from social identity theory, it was postulated that groups would generally exhibit ingroup favoring biases in attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm. In addition, it was expected that these effects would be enhanced by individual differences in the strength of ingroup identification.

These issues were investigated in three different contexts of intergroup conflicts: (1) the Turkish-Armenian conflict and mass killings between 1880s-1920s, (2) the Turkish-Kurdish conflict in Turkey between 1984 to 2005, and (3) the ongoing ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi since 1962. The above-mentioned conflicts vary along at least three theoretically important dimensions; thus, similar findings across

these conflicts promise to be strong evidence for the generalizability of my predictions. The dimensions in which these contexts vary include: (1) temporal distance, specifically whether it is a past (historical) conflict vs. recent conflict that occurred during respondents' lifetime; (2) the current stage of the conflict, that is, whether the violence is ongoing or whether it has diminished; and (3) the degree of violence over the course of the conflict, such as mass killings or genocidal acts versus less extreme forms of violence. Furthermore, these conflict contexts cover a range of issues including minority rights (Kurdish minority in Turkey), terrorism (acts of terror in the context of Turkish-Kurdish conflict), ethnic clashes (between Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi), and genocidal violence (Turkish-Armenian violence and genocidal acts in Burundi).

## CHAPTER 2

### STUDY 1: TURKISH-ARMENIAN CONFLICT

#### 2.1 Introduction

The goal of the first study was to examine how group members construe a historical period of intergroup conflict and violence, and whether variations in the strength of ingroup identification predict these construals. Specifically, in this study, construals include attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm inflicted by the ingroup and the outgroup on each other. Two dimensions of attributions were examined: the target group to which responsibility was attributed (ingroup vs. outgroup vs. external factors) and the type responsibility (instigation vs. consequences). These issues were examined in the context of Turkish-Armenian conflict by investigating Turks' construal of events related to the mass-killings of Armenians in the period between 1880 – 1920. Armenians refer to the massacres during this period, particularly in 1915, as the first genocide of the century, while Turks refer to the same event as inter-communal warfare (Lewy, 2005, p. *ix*). The Turkish governments since 1923 have firmly denied a genocide of Armenians by Turks (Jorgensen, 2003, p. 193). Disputes between Turks and Armenians about whether the massacres of Armenians in 1915 amount to genocide still continue.

##### 2.1.1 The Context of Turkish-Armenian Conflict

Before the break of the Word War I, the Ottoman Empire, the predecessor of current Turkey, had been losing its European territories in the Balkan Wars of 1911-1913, and had lost parts of Eastern Anatolia to Russia during the Turco-Russian war of

1877-1878 (Jorgensen, 2003). Late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century marked the disintegration of the Ottoman empire and the establishment of Young Turks' regime in 1908 which sought to reform, modernize, and to 'turkify' the Ottoman state into a mono-ethnic Turkish national state (Hovannissian, 1997, p. 27). Armenians inhabited parts of Eastern Anatolia, and like other non-Muslim populations, were considered a minority group, the so-called *millets*, in the Ottoman empire. Between 1880 -1920 there were several massacres of Armenians, including the massacres of about 100,000 Armenians between 1895 – 1896, culminating in the mass killing and deportation of Armenians in 1915. The context in which these events occurred was one in which the Ottoman empire feared disintegration, and was faced with rising nationalism of Christian minorities, interference from third parties, and national defeat in the Balkan wars in 1913 (Akcem, 2006). Scholars of Armenian origin (e.g., Dadrian, 2003; Hovannissian, 1997) and most international sources (Melson, 1992; Nazer, 1968; Staub, 1989) claim that more than a million Armenians perished as a result of direct and unprovoked massacres by the Turkish military or during deportations which intended to exterminate Armenians of the Ottoman empire.

#### 2.1.2 Characteristics of Turkish Narrative of the Events of 1915

Turkish state narrative asserts that Armenians, engaged in a nationalist movement, sided with the enemy (the Russians) during the Turco-Russian war, and attacked and terrorized the Turkish Muslim population. According to this narrative, it was the Armenians who had carried out massacres toward Turks, and consequently, the decision of the Young Turk regime to deport the Armenians was an extreme measure taken to protect the innocent Muslim population from attacks by Armenians and protect



territories (Jorgensen, 2003; see also Uras, 1988, for the Turkish arguments to the ‘Armenian Question’). According to official Turkish statistics 300,000 to 600,000 Armenians died as a result of direct fighting and due to starvation during the deportations (Lewy, 2005), and about 150,000 Turks were killed by Armenians during that period (Staub, 1989).

Since 1920s until recently there has been a silence and a national consensus on the Armenian issue in Turkey (Necef, 2003). However, with the international attention that these events have received in the recent decade, and with the increasing interest in human rights, the debate within Turkey heated up (Necef, 2003, p. 228). Necef (2003) classified the positions of the Turkish intellectuals and political debaters in four main groups: (1) a small group of “genocide recognizers” (2) a larger “mutual killings” group who characterize the events of 1915 as a tragic civil war in which Turks and Armenians harmed each other, but Armenians suffered to a greater extent than Turks, (3) the largest “we are the real victims” group who do not recognize Armenians’ suffering but emphasize how much Turks and Muslim populations suffered attacks by Armenians, and finally (4) a group that portrays the deportations of Armenians as necessary and about which Turks should not feel remorseful or apologetic (Necef, 2003, p. 230).

Overall, the interpretations of this period of history by Turks include a whole range of explanations that may be interpreted as psychological justification to deflect or deny responsibility. These explanations include justifications such as (a) blaming Armenians (for treason or for attacking Muslim populations); (b) claiming that violent acts were in self-defense (protection from territorial loss and/or protection of the Turkish population that was being targeted by Armenian banditry); (c) shifting responsibility to

external factors and third parties (claiming that Armenian deaths were a result of Kurdish attacks or starvation); (d) claiming benevolent motivations behind the deportations of Armenians (evacuation from war zones); (e) minimizing harm (arguing that the number of victims was lower than what has been claimed by Armenians or comparing the number of Armenian losses with Turkish losses during World War I); or (f) denial of massacres altogether (see Turkozu, 1986). In sum, the Turkish narrative of this conflict includes the whole range of the justification strategies making it a unique context in which to investigate variations in attributions of responsibility and perceived harm suffered.

There has been no research up to now to examine how ordinary Turkish people, rather than political debaters or historians, construe violence toward Armenians between 1880s to 1920s. Given the Turkish government's narrative, censorship, and denial of any allegations of genocide, the following questions arise: How do Turkish people construe these past events? To what degree do they endorse the state's narrative? Is there variation in Turks' interpretations of the events? What kind of justification strategies do people use to explain these historical events? Most importantly, do individual differences such as the strength of Turkish identification influence these construals? The current study sought to examine these questions.

Specific hypotheses for this study are summarized below:

## 2.2 Hypotheses

### 2.2.1 Whom Do Turks Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

I measured two types of attributions of responsibility: (a) the extent to which the ingroup, outgroup, or external factors were held responsible for the conflict; and (b)

whether each of the above-mentioned targets were held responsible for the instigation of the conflict vs. for its negative consequences.

H1: I predicted a main effect of Target group such that overall, Turkish respondents would perceive their ingroup (Turks) as less responsible compared to the outgroup (Armenians) and also compared to external factors (third parties and situational factors)

H2: I predicted an interaction effect of Target group x Type of responsibility, such that Turkish respondents would perceive the ingroup (Turks) as less responsible for instigating the conflict than for its consequences (H2a). However, they would perceive the outgroup (Armenians) (H2b) and external factors (e.g. third parties) (H2c) as more responsible for instigating the negative events than for the consequences.

#### 2.2.2 Who Do Turks Believe Suffered Due to the Conflict?

H3: I predicted that Turkish respondents would perceive the harm inflicted on the outgroup (Armenians) by their ingroup (Turks) to be lower than the harm inflicted on the ingroup (Turks) by the outgroup (Armenians).

#### 2.2.3 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Turks' Construals of the Conflict?

Stronger Turkish identification was predicted to enhance ingroup favoritism when participants make attributions of responsibility and assess severity of harm for these historical events. Specifically, I predicted that:

H4: Stronger Turkish identification should be associated with attributing more responsibility to the outgroup (i.e., more responsibility to Armenians) and to external factors (e.g., third parties) for the conflict, and by comparison, less responsibility to the

ingroup for the conflict (i.e., less responsibility to Turks). These effects should be similar across the two types of responsibility measured in this study (i.e., instigation and consequences of conflict).

H5: Stronger Turkish identification will be associated with more harm perceived to be inflicted by the outgroup (Armenians) on the ingroup (Turks) (H5a), and less harm to be inflicted by the ingroup (Turks) on the outgroup (H5b).

## 2.3 Methods

### 2.3.1 Participants

Participants were 113 Turkish students (42 females, 50 males, 21 participants did not report their gender). All participants were Turkish citizens and recruited from the Turkish foreign student population at various universities in the United States.

Participants were contacted via email lists of Turkish foreign student associations and through snowball sampling at various

U. S. universities. All participants completed a survey instrument online. The description of the goals of the study and the link to the online survey was sent to participants via email. Participants' names were entered into a lottery in which four gift certificates of USD 100 were awarded for participation in the research.

Participants' ages ranged from 22 to 49 years old ( $M = 29.38$ ,  $SD = 4.93$ ).

Overall, respondents had lived most of their lives in Turkey (years in Turkey:  $M = 23.04$ ,  $SD = 5.57$ ), and in recent years lived in the United States (years in the United States:  $M = 5.23$ ,  $SD = 5.02$ ). The sample represents different socioeconomic backgrounds: 74% of participants described themselves as coming from a middle income family, 16% as coming from a low income, and 10% as coming from a high income family.



The study was introduced as a survey investigating views of historical events involving intergroup violence. Participants were told that they would be asked questions about a period of intergroup violence experienced by their ingroup, specifically the Turkish-Armenian conflict between 1880s – 1920s.

### 2.3.2 Measures and Procedures

The survey instrument constituted of three sections: The first section included items assessing participants' ingroup (national) identification; a second section included items assessing participants' construal of the past conflict between Armenians and Turks between 1880s – 1920s, and a third section included demographic questions (age, gender, socio-economic status). All surveys were administered in Turkish. Two independent translators translated the survey to Turkish. Any disagreements in wording were solved by discussions among the researcher and the translators. In addition, a pilot test was conducted with a number of participants from the participant pool.

After completing the first section on ingroup (Turkish) identification, participants were asked to write down in as much detail as possible a description of the violent conflict between Turks and Armenians in the period between 1880s and 1920s. The purpose was to have participants reflect on this period of history prior to responding to subsequent close-ended items. Afterwards, a series of close-ended questions assessed participants' construals of the Turkish –Armenian with a specific focus on 1915 when the genocide of Armenians occurred. Here, I measured (1) attribution of responsibility to the ingroup, outgroup, and external factors (third-parties, situational causes), and (2) perceived severity of harm inflicted on the ingroup vs. outgroup.

### 2.3.2.1 Attribution of Responsibility

Two items assessed attributions of responsibility for each of three target groups: the ingroup (Turks), the outgroup (Armenians), and external factors (third parties and situational factors). This included the amount of responsibility participants attributed to each target group for *instigating* the violent events (1 item), and the amount responsibility they attributed to each target for the *consequences* of the events including the damage and suffering caused (1 item). The items started with a lead question: “How much responsibility does each of the following groups have for inciting the events and for their negative consequences?”. Participants responded on 7-point scales (0 = no responsibility; 6 = complete responsibility).

### 2.3.2.2 Severity of Harm

Several indicators of harm were used to assess the perceived harm inflicted on each group (1) during the whole period of conflict between 1880 -1920, and (2) in 1915.

For the entire period of conflict, one item asked participants to estimate the extent of economic harm that each group experienced due to the conflict between Turks and Armenians. These items were assessed on 7-point scales (0 = no negative consequences; 6 = severe negative consequences). The two ingroup harm items ( $\alpha = .70$ ) and the two outgroup harm items ( $\alpha = .77$ ) revealed good reliabilities and were averaged to form measures of ingroup harm and outgroup harm.

Similarly, for 1915 in particular, perceived severity of harm caused by the ingroup was assessed with two items asking participants to estimate (1) the number of Armenians killed by Turks in 1915, and (2) the number of Armenians forcefully displaced from their villages by Turks in 1915. Likewise, the perceived severity of harm caused by the



outgroup was assessed by asking participants to estimate (1) the number of Turks killed by Armenians in 1915, and (2) the number of Turks forcefully displaced from their villages by Armenians in 1915. Participants rated the severity of harm using 6-point scales consisting of the following estimate ranges: (1) less than 100,000 people killed, (2) 100,001 to 300,000, (3) 300,001 – 500,000, (4) 500,001 – 700,000, (5) 700,001 – 900,000, (6) more than 900,000<sup>1</sup>.

### 2.3.2.3 Ingroup identification

Ingroup identification was assessed by five items that have been used extensively in prior research on social identity theory (Doosje et al., 1998; Ellemers, Kortekaas, & Ouwerkerk, 1999; Jackson, 2002; Leach et al., 2008; Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). The items were adapted to assess Turkish identification and included: (1) Being Turkish is an important part of how I see myself, (2) I am glad to be a Turk, (3) The fact that I am Turkish is an important part of my identity, (4) Being Turkish gives me good feelings, and (5) Being Turkish is an important part of my self-image. Participants were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each statement on a six point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). The five ingroup identification items revealed very good reliability ( $\alpha = .93$ ), and therefore, responses were averaged to create a single identification score.

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<sup>1</sup> Although it is customary to have intervals of equal size, the first interval was purposely set to be less than 200,000 based on pilot feedback and research on the conflict, showing that the number of Turkish casualties, compared to Armenian casualties in the conflict, is believed to be very small.

## 2.4 Results

### 2.4.1 Who Do Turks Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

To assess Turks' attributions of responsibility, a 3 (Target of attribution: ingroup vs. outgroup vs. external factors) X 2 (Type of attribution: instigation vs. consequences) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with target of attribution and type of attribution as within-subject predictors. The dependent variable was the amount of responsibility.

As predicted (H1), the results yielded a significant main effect of target of attribution,  $F(2, 216) = 23.26, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$ , such that, Turks generally attributed less responsibility to their ingroup ( $M = 2.86, SE = .15$ ) than to the outgroup ( $M = 3.95, SE = .15$ ) and to external factors ( $M = 4.26, SE = .15$ ) ( $ps < .001$ ). There was no difference between the amount of responsibility attributed to the outgroup and to the external factors ( $p = .12$ ).

The analysis also yielded a significant Target of attribution X Type of responsibility interaction,  $F(2, 216) = 55.59, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$  (see Figure 1). To clarify the interaction effect pair-wise  $t$  tests were conducted to compare the amount of responsibility for the instigation versus the negative consequences of the events for the in- and out-group separately. As expected (H2a), Turks perceived the ingroup as less responsible for instigating the events ( $M = 2.23, SE = .16$ ) than for its negative consequences ( $M = 3.50, SE = .16$ ),  $t(109) = -9.17, p < .001$ . By contrast, in line with predictions (H2b and H2c), the outgroup and the external factors were perceived to be more responsible for the instigation ( $M = 4.17, SE = .15$  and  $M = 4.48, SE = .15$  respectively) than for the consequences of the conflict and violence ( $M = 3.73, SE = .18$ ),

$t(110) = 3.65, p < .001$ , for the outgroup target, and ( $M = 4.05, SE = .17$ ),  $t(109) = 3.40, p = .001$ , external factors<sup>2</sup>.

#### 2.4.2 Who Do Turks Believe Suffered Due to the Conflict?

To assess Turks' perceptions regarding severity of harm (H3), paired samples  $t$  tests were conducted with each indicator of harm as the dependent variable. The analyses compared participants' estimates of the amount of harm inflicted on each group during the course of the conflict between 1880s – 1920s, and similar harm (i.e., number of casualties and number of displaced individuals) inflicted on each group in 1915. For severity of harm during the whole course of conflict, participants typically perceived harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $M = 5.01, SD = 1.29$ ) to be more severe than the harm inflicted on the ingroup ( $M = 4.52, SD = 1.30$ ),  $t(93) = -2.86, p = .005$ . Similarly, for the 1915 events, the amount of harm inflicted on the outgroup was perceived to be greater than the harm experienced by the ingroup. Specifically, participants estimated a higher number of Armenian casualties ( $M = 2.26, SD = 1.41$ ); and displaced Armenians ( $M =$

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<sup>2</sup> Univariate ANOVAs were conducted to compare the perceived differences in attributions of responsibility separately for the instigation and the consequences of events. Results yielded significant differences for instigation of events such that participants perceived ingroup's responsibility as lower than outgroup's responsibility or the external factors' responsibility,  $F(2, 216) = 58.57, p < .001, \eta^2 = .35$ . A similar pattern (marginally significant) emerged for attributions of responsibility for the consequences of events,  $F(2, 216) = 2.58, p = .08, \eta^2 = .02$ .

3.36,  $SD = 1.57$ ) compared to the number of Turkish casualties ( $M = 1.80$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ),  $t(75) = 2.48$ ,  $p = .015$ , and of the displaced Turks ( $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ),  $t(73) = 7.46$ ,  $p < .001$ .<sup>3</sup>

#### 2.4.3 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Turks' Construals of the Conflict?

To test Hypothesis 4, separate regression analyses were conducted with ingroup identification as the predictor and each attribution of responsibility as the dependent variable. Summary results from both sets of analyses are presented in Table 1. As shown in the table, regression analyses revealed the same patterns of ingroup identification effects for both types of responsibility (i.e., instigation of the conflict and its consequences). Therefore, scores for the attribution of responsibility were collapsed across the two items for each target (ingroup, outgroup, external factors). As illustrated in Figure 2, stronger Turkish identification led to attributing less responsibility to the ingroup (Turks) for the conflict,  $\beta = -.56$ ,  $t(108) = -7.04$ ,  $p < .001$ , but more responsibility to the outgroup (Armenians),  $\beta = .46$ ,  $t(109) = 5.43$ ,  $p < .001$ , and to the external factors,  $\beta = .39$ ,  $t(108) = 4.37$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Similar to the previous analyses, to test the effect of ingroup identification, regression analyses were conducted with Turkish identification as the predictor and each severity of harm measure (overall harm, economic harm, and casualty estimates) as the dependent variable. The ingroup and the outgroup severity of harm were treated as

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<sup>3</sup> Only 69% of the sample provided estimates for the number of casualties and displaced people in the events of 1915. Independent samples  $t$  tests were conducted to compare the characteristics of the participants who provided estimates of harm and those who did not provide responses. The two groups did not differ in any dimension (age, political interest, interest in history, or in their identification as Turks) except for gender. Women were less likely to provide estimates for the severity of harm; 75% of respondents who did not provide an estimate were women.



separate dependent variables. The results of these analyses are summarized in Table 2. As expected (H5), for each dependent variable (number of casualties, people displaced, overall harm), participants who identified more strongly with their ingroup reported less harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $\beta$ s = -.36, -.29, -.26 respectively) and more harm inflicted on the ingroup ( $\beta$ s = .24, .26, .33 respectively).

## 2.5 Discussion

Overall, the results of Study 1 indicated that Turks believed both groups to be responsible for the conflict and both to have suffered substantially. However, supporting the ingroup favoritism hypothesis, Turkish respondents attributed less responsibility to the ingroup compared to the outgroup and external factors. These results are particularly notable considering the magnitude of the conflict--Turkey is accused of committing genocide toward the Armenians (Lewy, 2005). As expected, Turks attributed less responsibility to the ingroup for instigating the violent events than for their consequences, whereas the Armenian outgroup and the external factors were viewed as more responsible for the instigation of the events than for its consequences. Although Turks acknowledged some responsibility for the consequences of their ingroup's violent acts, they perceived these acts to be provoked by the outgroup or third parties, thus reducing the ingroup's responsibility. This pattern of attributions shows how justification of harmdoing becomes embedded in group members' construals and representation of the conflict.

Contradicting the ingroup favoritism hypothesis, Turks perceived more harm to be inflicted on the Armenians than on their ingroup. As Turkey is accused of being the perpetrator of genocide, perhaps this finding is not so surprising (i.e., there are likely to be reality constraints on how much individuals can minimize the perpetration of harm

done by their ingroup). It should be noted that while Turks believed that Armenians suffered considerably, they also perceived their ingroup to have been harmed considerably. Turks' representations of these events are consistent with the Turkish government narrative, both with regard to attributions of responsibility (e.g., instigation vs. consequences) and to the amount of harm inflicted on each group. For instance, the mean range of the estimates of Armenian casualties (range between 100,000 to 500,000) and Turkish casualties (between 0 to 300,000) in this sample matches the government's statistics. When it is not feasible to deny the harm done by one's ingroup, then ingroup members may attempt to justify why the harm was inflicted (Wohl & Branscombe, 2008). In this context, Turkish respondents seem to justify why they inflicted harm by attributing more responsibility to Armenians for instigating the events.

Most importantly, findings also demonstrated that an individual level factor, such as ingroup identification, was an important predictor of these construals, accounting for a substantial portion of the explained variance in attributions of responsibility (10% - 29%) and for perceived severity of harm (6% - 13%). Overall, stronger ingroup identification was associated with more ingroup favoritism both in attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm. These findings suggest that individual level differences in group members' attachment to their ingroup have an important influence on their representations of the past and the degree to which the dominant societal narrative is endorsed. In the current context, the strength of ingroup identification was associated with construals of historical events. Then, the question is whether the strength of ingroup identification would exhibit similar trends in recent conflicts which occurred during



respondents' lifetime when there is more opportunity for group members to make their own assessment of the events.

### STUDY 2: TURKISH-KURDISH CONFLICT

#### 3.1 Introduction

While the first study examined construals of past events that occurred about one century ago, and which are predominantly influenced by community narratives (e.g., family stories, peers' opinions) as well as government-endorsed narratives in historical texts (e.g., history books), Study 2 examined construals of a recent conflict that has been continuing during participants' lifetime. As such, it provided more direct evidence for the degree to which participants' own interpretations of a conflict may vary due to their own experiences with the conflict, rather than the degree to which they conform to government or societal narratives.

Study 2 extended Study 1 in five important ways: (1) it examined participants' construal of recent intergroup violence that occurred during their lifetime (in the context of Turkish-Kurdish conflict), (2) it compared both groups' perspectives of the conflict (Turks and Kurds), (3) it assessed an additional dimension of participants' construals, namely, conflict framing (see below for details), (4) it moved beyond ingroup and outgroup distinctions to assess which types of targets affiliated with the in- or outgroup were held responsible for the conflict, and (5) it examined the effect of different types of group identification (ethnic vs. national identification) on construals of the conflict.

Below, I elaborate on each of these theoretical extensions.

### 3.1.1 The Context of the Conflict

Study 2 focused on the Turkish-Kurdish conflict in Turkey between 1984 -2005. Kurds are the largest ethnic minority in Turkey constituting around 14% - 20% of the population (CIA World Factbook, 2009; KONDA, 2006). Tensions between the Kurdish minority and the Turkish state can be traced to the beginnings of the Turkish republic. In 1925, in a massive Kurdish uprising in Eastern Anatolia, Kurds drove Turkish officials away from their villages in an attempt to form their own state, Kurdistan (Husain & Shumock, 2006). The uprising was later crushed by Turkish forces. The Turkish republic forced various ethnic minority groups within the remnants of the Ottoman empire to assimilate to a Turkish identity (Oke, 2005, p.25, Yavuz, 2001). The Turkish state did not recognize the existence of a separate Kurdish ethnic minority in Turkey and suppressed collective and public expressions of Kurdish identity (e.g., banning the use of Kurdish language, and replacing Kurdish names of towns and children with Turkish names) (Barkey, 2000). The government's assimilation policies increased Kurds' resentment toward the government, led to defiance of these policies by Kurdish activists (Watts, 2007) and to a restrained political movement to gain minority rights (Saatci, 2002). In 1984, the insurgent organization, Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan or Kurdistan's Workers Party (abbreviated as PKK), launched a violent campaign in Southeast Turkey. The PKK's aim was to establish an independent Kurdish state in the Southeastern Turkey which would eventually include other Kurdish populated areas of the neighbor countries (Watts, 2007). Since 1984, around 30,000 people have been killed either in attacks by the PKK or as a result of Turkish army's military campaigns (Oke, 2005, p. 28; Saatci, 2002). The violent conflict diminished after the capture of the PKK leader in 1999, and

since then, Turkey, with pressure from the European Union, has passed a series of laws granting cultural rights to its Kurdish citizens (Somer, 2004). Kurds are permitted to hold a variety of positions in the Turkish government as long as they identify themselves as Turks, and a large number of Kurds are assimilated in the Turkish society (Rubin, 2003).

### 3.1.2 A Comparison of both Groups' Perspectives of the Conflict

Study 2 examined how each side in the conflict construed the past, thus providing an opportunity to compare individuals' construals of the conflict as a function of their group membership. All Turkish citizens, both ethnic Turks and ethnic Kurds, are likely to have encountered the national narrative about the conflict through mainstream media exposure. Therefore, any obtained group differences in the construal of intergroup violence are likely to be influenced by group membership and the nature of each group's experiences and narratives. It was expected that group membership would predict differential construal of the conflict, with each group trying to justify the acts of violence committed by ingroup members. Based on ingroup favoritism predictions of social identity theory, I hypothesized that participants in each group would hold mirror-image perceptions of the violent events, such that each group would attribute more responsibility to the outgroup and perceive more harm inflicted on their ingroup relative to the outgroup.

### 3.1.3 Who do Turks and Kurds Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

Celik and Blum (2007) identified four primary parties in this conflict: the Turkish state, the PKK, Turkish citizens, and Kurdish citizens of Turkey. They identified international actors (e.g., the U.S. and European Union) as secondary parties in the conflict (Celik & Blum, 2007). To account for this complexity, the current study moved

beyond simple ingroup vs. outgroup targets by assessing the amount of responsibility attributed to different types of actors that are perceived to be potential parties in the conflict (i.e., the Turkish state, the PKK, Turks, Kurds, and third parties). In addition to the self-evident categories of Turks and Kurds, the Turkish state is typically associated with the Turkish ethnic group, and the PKK is associated with the Kurdish ethnic group. From an ingroup favoritism perspective, I predicted that Turks and Kurds would exhibit different patterns of attributions of responsibility. Specifically, Turkish participants relative to Kurdish participants would attribute more responsibility to the PKK and to Kurds, but less responsibility to the Turkish state and to Turks.

#### 3.1.4 Do Turks and Kurds Frame the Conflict Differently?

Groups in conflict might not only exhibit differences in their interpretations of events (i.e., attributions of responsibility and severity of harm), but they might have differential understandings of the nature of the conflict of which they are part. As Horowitz (1991) asserts, “There is the conflict itself, and there is the meta-conflict - the conflict about the nature of the conflict” (p. 2). In the current context, Celik and Blum (2007) identify three ways in which the Kurdish conflict in Turkey has been framed: (1) as a conflict between the Turkish state and an ethnic minority, (2) as a conflict between the Turkish state and an insurgent group, and (3) as ethnic tensions between Turks and Kurds. These different framings of the conflict identify different issues that are central to the conflict (e.g., a minority struggling for its rights vs. a problem with terrorism vs. interethnic tensions respectively), as well as the strategies and policies appropriate for their resolution (e.g., fighting terror vs. granting minority rights vs. designing strategies to reduce ethnocentrism and ameliorate the relationship between groups).



Kurds and most international actors define the problem as a matter of a majority group (the Turks) denying the rights of a minority group (Cornell, 2001). Some Kurdish groups also perceive Turkey as the colonialist enemy (Gunter, 1997, p. 51). Conversely, the Turkish government's stand on this issue has been that its citizens of Kurdish ethnicity enjoy full rights as Turkish citizens in Turkey, thus denying that Turkey has an ethnic minority problem (Kirisci & Winrow, 1997, p. 2). According to the official Turkish discourse, Turkey has a terrorism problem which has been supported by foreign states aiming to weaken Turkey (Cornell, 2001; Oke, 2001).

While at a policy level there have been debates about the multiple framings of this conflict, so far no research has investigated how group members on each side psychologically construe this conflict. Do group members in conflict share a common understanding of the nature of the conflict? I hypothesized that Turkish and Kurdish participants would endorse a conflict frame that portrays the ingroup in a positive light (i.e., ingroup favoring frame). On one hand, a terrorism framing of the conflict portrays the general population (both Turks and Kurds) and the Turkish government as the innocent victims, and the PKK and its supporters as the perpetrators. This framing legitimizes the Turkish position and its policies; therefore it would be more attractive to Turks. On the other hand, a minority rights issue frame portrays the Kurdish minority as the innocent oppressed group, whereas the Turkish state, and to some extent the Turks who support the government's policies, are portrayed as the perpetrators. As this framing legitimizes Kurds' position in the conflict and acknowledges the suppression of their rights, it would primarily be attractive to Kurds. Based on this, I predicted that Turks



relative to Kurds, would be more likely to endorse a terrorism frame of the conflict, but less likely to endorse a minority rights issue framing.

### 3.1.5 The Influence of Ethnic vs. National Identification on Construals of Conflict

This study also investigated how different types of ingroup identifications (ethnic versus national identification) affect group members' construals of the conflict. The interface between these types of group identifications has gained importance with the rise of the number of ethno-national conflicts in multi-ethnic states (Sidanius, Fechbach, Levin, & Pratto, 1997). Accordingly, it is important to measure and control for the impact of national identity (which is shared among ethnic groups within a nation state) when discussing the effect of their unique ethnic identities on some intergroup outcome.

In this study, identification with the ethnic group is the primary variable of interest. Kurds in Turkey hold two different identities that are likely to be independent (Kurdish ethnicity and Turkish nationality) whereas for Turks these identities are closely aligned (Turkish ethnicity and Turkish nationality). Therefore, in this study, both ethnic (Kurdish and Turkish) and national identification (Turkish nationality) were assessed. This procedure makes possible the assessment of the two groups' ethnic identification as the primary predictors while controlling for the potential effects of their shared national identification. Second, I investigated the effect of shared national identification on individuals' construals of the conflict. To understand the interface between ethnic and national identification, I used Sidanius et al.'s (1997) theorizing on this issue. Sidanius et al. (1997) identified three ways in which the relation between ethnic and national identities are viewed: (1) the melting pot perspective whereby individuals are expected to minimize emphasis on their ethnic identity and instead identify with their national group

only; (2) the multicultural or ethnic pluralism perspective where dual commitments to both ethnic and national identities are seen as appropriate and encouraged both for dominant and subordinate groups; and (3) the group dominance perspective where national identity is defined based on the dominant group's identity, symbols and resources. As Turkey has excluded the Kurdish identity from its national identity discourse, and even denied that a Kurdish minority group existed within its borders since the beginning of 1920s to the end of 1980s (Yeğen, 1996), the Turkish-Kurdish context fits clearly the group dominance perspective. As such, I predicted that the dominant group (i.e., ethnic Turks) relative to the subordinate group (i.e., ethnic Kurds) would identify more strongly with the national group, and the overlap between ethnic and national identification would be stronger for the dominant group relative to the subordinate group. Additionally, within the context of the conflict, national identification should hold different meanings for Turks and for Kurds. For Turks, ethnic and national identification should predict similar effects on construals of the conflict, such that both would be associated with higher ingroup favoritism. However, for minority Kurds, the stronger the *Turkish* national identification the more they would show ingroup (i.e., national group) favoritism by endorsing the Turkish narrative of the conflict at a higher degree. In other words, national and ethnic identification were expected to have opposite effects on conflict construals for Kurdish participants.

### 3.2 Hypotheses

The construals of the Turkish-Kurdish conflict were examined by three dependent measures: attributions of responsibility, perceived severity of harm, and conflict framing. The predictions regarding the type of responsibility (responsibility for the instigation vs.

the consequences) were the same as in Study 1. However, extending beyond Study 1, in the current study, I made predictions about the effect of (1) ethnic group membership, (2) different target groups, (3) framing of the conflict, and (4) the role of ethnic versus national identification on conflict construals. All the predictions are summarized below.

### 3.2.1 Who Do Turks and Kurds Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

H1: Members of each group were expected to attribute less responsibility to targets associated with their ingroup relative to the outgroup or third parties. Because in this study both sides of the conflict are included, this prediction was expected to be revealed by an interaction between Ethnic group membership and Target group. Specifically,

(H1a) Kurdish participants were expected to attribute more responsibility to the Turkish state, Turks, and third parties, than the PKK and Kurds.

(H1b) Conversely, Turkish participants were expected to attribute more responsibility to the PKK, Kurds, and third parties, than to the state and Turks.

(H1c) In addition, Turkish participants were predicted to attribute more responsibility to the PKK, Kurds, and third parties relative to Kurdish participants; whereas Kurdish participants were predicted to attribute more responsibility to the state and to Turks relative to Turkish participants.

H2: Paralleling the hypotheses in Study 1, here, I also predicted an interaction of Target group and Type of responsibility. However, because both sides of the conflict are represented in this study, this interaction was expected to be qualified by Ethnic group membership. Specifically,

(H2a) Respondents would perceive parties representing the ingroup as less responsible for the instigation than for the consequences of the violent events;

(H2b) however, they would perceive parties representing the outgroup and third parties as more responsible for the instigation than for the consequences of the violent events.

### 3.2.2 Who Do Turks and Kurds Believe Suffered Due to the Conflict?

H3: In line with the predictions in Study 1, I predicted a main effect of Target group such that both groups were expected to perceive the harm inflicted on the ingroup as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup.

### 3.2.3 Do Turks and Kurds Frame the Conflict Differently?

H4: I predicted an interaction between Ethnic group membership and Conflict framing.

Specifically,

(H4a) ethnic Turks relative to Kurds were expected to endorse more strongly a terrorism frame of the conflict. That is, they would be more likely to perceive the conflict as between either the PKK and the people, or the PKK and the state.

(H4b) By contrast, Kurds relative to Turks were expected to endorse a minority issue frame, such that they would be more likely to perceive the conflict as between the government and the citizens (i.e., Kurdish minority) in Turkey.

However, Kurdish and Turkish respondents would be equally likely to endorse an ethnic conflict frame (i.e., a conflict between Turks and Kurds in Turkey).



### 3.2.4 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Turks' and Kurds' Construals of the Conflict?

#### 3.2.4.1 The Role of Ethnic Identification on Construals of the Conflict

##### 3.2.4.1.1 Attributions of Responsibility

Similar to the predictions in Study 1,

H5: stronger ethnic identification (either Turkish or Kurdish) should be associated with less responsibility attributed to ingroup targets, and more responsibility attributed to outgroup targets and to third parties. Based on this, I predicted an interaction effect between ethnic group membership and ethnic identification, such that

(H5a) stronger ethnic identification for Turks should be associated with more responsibility attributed to Kurds and to the PKK, and less responsibility attributed to the state and to Turks.

(H5b) Conversely, stronger ethnic identification for Kurds should be associated with more responsibility attributed to the state and to Turks, but less responsibility attributed to Kurds and to the PKK.

(H5c) For third parties, only a main effect of ethnic identification was expected, such that for both groups, the more they would identify with the ethnic group, the more responsibility they would attribute to third parties.

##### 3.2.4.1.2 Severity of Harm

H6: I predicted a main effect of ethnic identification, such that for both groups (Turks and Kurds), stronger ethnic identification was expected to produce more harm perceived to be inflicted upon the ingroup, and less harm inflicted upon the outgroup.

### 3.2.4.2 The Role of Ethnic vs. National Identification on Construals of the Conflict

I expected that, for Turks, ethnic and national identification would be highly correlated, whereas, for Kurds, the relationship between ethnic and national identification would be weak. Based on this,

H7: For Turks, national identification should produce the same trend of effects as ethnic identification. That is,

(H7a) stronger national identification was expected to be associated with more responsibility attributed to the PKK, to Kurds, and to third parties, but to less responsibility attributed to the state and to Turks.

(H7b) Conversely, national identification should produce the opposite effect of ethnic identification for Kurds. The more Kurds identify with the Turkish national group, the more they were expected to attribute responsibility to the PKK, to Kurds and to third parties, and the less they were expected to attribute responsibility to the state and to Turks.

H8: I predicted an interaction effect between national identification and ethnic group membership, such that for Turks stronger national identification was expected to predict ingroup favoritism, whereas for Kurds, it was expected to predict outgroup favoritism. That is, for Turks, stronger national identification should predict more harm perceived to be inflicted upon the ingroup, and less harm inflicted upon the outgroup. By contrast, the more ethnic Kurds identify with the Turkish national group the less harm they would perceive to be inflicted on the ingroup, and the more harm they would perceive to be inflicted on the outgroup.



### 3.2.4.3 The Role of Ethnic vs. National Identification on Conflict Framing

H9: I predicted an interaction effect of ethnic group membership and ethnic identification on minority issue framing. Specifically,

(H9a) For Kurds, stronger ethnic identification should predict a higher endorsement of a minority issue conflict frame (i.e., a conflict between the state and the citizens) for Kurds, but a lower endorsement of this framing for Turks.

(H9b) Similarly, I also predicted an interaction effect of ethnic group membership and ethnic identification on terrorism framing, such that, stronger ethnic identification should predict more endorsement of a terrorism frame (i.e., a conflict between the PKK and the citizens) for ethnic Turks, but less endorsement of this conflict frame for Kurds.

(H9c) I predicted only a main effect of ethnic identification on the endorsement of ethnic conflict frame (i.e., a conflict between Turkish and Kurdish civilians) such that for both groups, ethnic identification would be related to a stronger endorsement of an ethnic conflict frame.

Similar to the previous hypotheses, the strength of national identification is expected to produce ingroup favoring biases for Turks, but outgroup favoring biases for Kurds. With regard to conflict framing, for both Turks and Kurds, the effect of national identification should exhibit similar trends which I describe below.

H10: I predicted a main effect of national identification such that, the more respondents (Turks and Kurds) identify with the national group, the more they were expected to endorse a terrorism frame (H10a), an ethnic conflict frame (H10b), a conflict

between the PKK and the state (H10c), but the less they were expected to endorse a minority issue frame (i.e., a conflict between the state and the citizens) (H10d).

### 3.3 Methods

#### 3.3.1 Participants

##### 3.3.1.1 Ethnic Composition of the Sample

Participants were 298 Turkish nationals living in Turkey. Participants' ethnic group membership was assessed based on self reports of ethnicity and language spoken in their parents' household<sup>4</sup>. Based on these assessments, 194 ethnic Turks (124 females, 57 males, 13 participants did not report their gender) and 80 ethnic Kurds (17 females, 56 males, 7 participants did not report their gender) participated in the survey. In addition, 18 participants identified with an ethnic group other than Turks or Kurds (e.g., Caucasian, Bulgarian, Albanian, Arab, etc.); two participants identified themselves with a Turkish subgroup based on Turkey's regional differences (e.g., the Black Sea region); four participants identified their ethnic identity as Turkish citizens. The 24 participants who identified themselves with a group other than Turkish or Kurdish ethnic groups were excluded from the analyses leaving a final sample of 274 respondents.

The majority of the participants (229 participants; 83.5%) were recruited at three universities in Istanbul. Six participants were residing in a country other than Turkey; 9% of Turks and 27% of Kurds were residing in a Turkish city other than Istanbul. The

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<sup>4</sup> Ethnic membership is a contentious issue in Turkey, especially for Kurds whose identity has been denied for several decades by the Turkish state. Due to the assimilation policies, many citizens of Kurdish origin refrain from publicly reporting their ethnic group membership. As such, it is common to assess Kurdish group membership indirectly by asking participants to report the language spoken in their household (i.e., Kurdish). This strategy is widely used in Turkish surveys and opinion polls (KONDA, 2006).

sample's mean age was 23.03 years ( $SD = 4.93$ ) (Turks:  $M = 22.4$ ,  $SD = 2.9$ ; Kurds:  $M = 25.5$ ,  $SD = 7.52$ ).

The majority (76.3%) of the ethnic Turks described the economic status of their families as middle-class, 4.1% as working class, and 12.4% as upper-middle class. Conversely, 58.8% of ethnic Kurds described the economic status of their families as middle-class, 28.8% as working class, and 3.8% as upper-middle class. In addition, in the Turkish sample, 25.5% of the parents had completed the primary education or lower, 28.5% of the parents had a secondary education degree (high school degree), and 40% of the parents had a university or a higher degree. In the Kurdish sample, 67.7% of the parents received only primary education, 11.8% of the parents had secondary education, and 13.1% of the parents had a university degree or higher.

### 3.3.1.2 Data Collection Procedures

All participants completed a survey. One hundred ninety nine participants completed hard copy versions of the survey, while 73 participants completed the survey online (20% of Turks and 40 % of Kurds)<sup>5</sup>. All surveys were administered in Turkish.

### 3.3.2 Measures

#### 3.3.2.1 Attributions of Responsibility

Attributions of responsibility for the instigation and consequences of the conflict were examined separately for the five target groups: the state, the PKK and other militant groups, Turks, Kurds, and third parties. First, participants rated the amount of responsibility they attributed to each group for the instigation of the violent events, and

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<sup>5</sup>The data analyses yielded the same pattern of results when the data were analyzed separately for those respondents who completed the hard copy version of the survey vs. those who completed the online version of the survey.

then they rated the responsibility they attributed to the same groups for the consequences of the conflict (i.e., the damage and harm caused). Two items assessed the amount of responsibility attributed to the state (to the Turkish government and to the Turkish military) (instigation:  $\alpha = .87$  for Turks and  $\alpha = .85$  for Kurds; consequences:  $\alpha = .86$  for Turks,  $\alpha = .87$  for Kurds), two items assessed the responsibility attributed to third parties (foreign groups and neighboring countries) (instigation:  $\alpha = .80$  for Turks and  $\alpha = .96$  for Kurds; consequences:  $\alpha = .83$  for Turks and  $\alpha = .96$ , for Kurds), and one item each assessed the amount of responsibility attributed to the PKK, Turks, and Kurds. All items were assessed in 7-point scales (0 = no responsibility; 6 = complete responsibility).

#### 3.3.2.2 Severity of Harm

Perceived severity of harm was assessed in a similar manner to Study 1. One item tapping the extent of economic harm was used to estimate the amount of harm inflicted on Turks and on Kurds. This item was assessed on a 7-point scale (0 = no negative consequences; 6 = very negative consequences). In addition, as in Study 1, each group's casualty estimates were assessed. However, in order to avoid a no response problem which frequently occurred in Study 1 for this question, instead of asking to guess the actual number of casualties, in this study participants were asked to estimate the percentage of the *innocent* casualties who were of Turkish vs. Kurdish origin. The question stated: "Since the start of the violence in 1980s till now, what percentage of the innocent victims in this conflict were of Turkish origin and what percentage were of Kurdish origin?"



### 3.3.2.3 Conflict Framing

Four items were used to assess participants' endorsement of each conflict frame: terrorism, minority issue, ethnic conflict, or a conflict between the state versus the PKK. Specifically, participants rated (0 = not at all, 5 = completely) the degree to which they viewed the conflict as: (1) a conflict between Turkish state and the citizens (minority issue), (2) a conflict between the PKK and the citizens (terrorism), (3) a conflict between Turks and Kurds (ethnic conflict), and (4) a conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK.

### 3.3.2.4 Ingroup Identification

The ingroup identification scale included the same items as in Study 1 adapted to assess either (1) identification as Turkish citizens, or (2) identification with the ethnic group. First, participants were asked to complete the measure based on how they feel about being a citizen of Turkey (i.e., a member of their national group), and afterwards, they completed a modified measure in which they were asked how they felt about being a member of their ethnic group. National identification items specified the national group (e.g., I am glad to be a citizen of Turkey), however ethnic identification items did not specify the ethnic group (e.g., I am glad to be a member of my ethnic group). After responding to the items, participants were asked to specify which ethnic group they had in mind when completing the scale. All items were assessed in 6-point scales (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). The five ethnic identification items ( $\alpha = .95$  for Turks;  $\alpha = .94$  for Kurds) and the five national identification items ( $\alpha = .94$  for Turks;  $\alpha = .92$  for Kurds) revealed very good reliabilities.



### 3.3.2.5 Demographic Variables

Similar to Study 1, demographic questions included assessment of gender, age, socio-economic status, and educational level.

## 3.4 Results

### 3.4.1 Who do Turks and Kurds Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

To test the hypotheses (H1 and H2) regarding attributions of responsibility, a 5 (Target group: the PKK vs. the state vs. Turks vs. Kurds vs. third parties) X 2 (Type of responsibility: instigation vs. consequences) X 2 (Ethnic group membership: Turks vs. Kurds) mixed ANOVA was conducted with Target group and Type of responsibility as within-subject factors, and Ethnic group membership as the between-subject factor.

As predicted (H1), the results yielded a Target group X Ethnic group membership interaction,  $F(4, 1060) = 68.63, p < .001, \eta^2 = .21$ , indicating that Turkish and Kurdish respondents exhibit different patterns of attributions (see Figure 3). To clarify the interaction effect and test the specific hypotheses (H1a-c) two sets of analyses were conducted. First, ANOVAs were conducted separately for Turkish and Kurdish participants (to test H1a and b). Then, planned contrasts were conducted to assess whether Turkish and Kurdish participants differed in the amount of responsibility they attributed to each target group (to test H1c). Turkish participants placed most responsibility onto the PKK and third parties, followed by the state, Kurds, and the least amount of responsibility on Turks,  $F(4, 756) = 142.99, p < .001, \eta^2 = .43$ . Turkish participants placed the same amount of responsibility on Kurds as on the state ( $M_D = -.06, SE = .19, p = .77$ ). All other pair-wise comparisons were significant at  $p < .001$ .

As expected (H1b), Kurdish respondents placed most responsibility on the state and third parties, followed by the PKK, Turks, and lastly by Kurds,  $F(4, 304) = 49.87, p < .001, \eta^2 = .40$ . Planned contrasts showed that Kurdish respondents placed the same amount of responsibility on the PKK as on Turks ( $M_D = .53, SE = .31, p = .09$ ), and the same amount of responsibility on the PKK as on third parties ( $M_D = -.36, SE = .28, p = .21$ ). All other pair-wise comparisons were significant ( $p < .001$ ).

In addition, as expected (H1c), Turkish respondents relative to Kurdish respondents attributed more responsibility to the PKK,  $F(1, 266) = 136.05, p < .001, \eta^2 = .34$ , to Kurds,  $F(1, 266) = 58.31, p < .001, \eta^2 = .18$ , and to third parties,  $F(1, 266) = 17.54, p < .001, \eta^2 = .06$ ; whereas Kurdish respondents relative to Turkish respondents attributed more responsibility to the state,  $F(1, 266) = 80.77, p < .001, \eta^2 = .23$ , and marginally more responsibility to Turks,  $F(1, 266) = 3.16, p = .08, \eta^2 = .012$ .

These results suggest that each group perceives the outgroup protagonists as most responsible. For example, Turks perceive the PKK as most responsible for the conflict, whereas Kurds perceive the state as most responsible. In addition, respondents place more responsibility on the institutions (the state or the insurgent group) than on third parties, and they place the least responsibility on the civilians (either Turks or Kurds).

The analysis also yielded a significant interaction between Target group and Type of responsibility,  $F(4, 1060) = 5.63, p < .001, \eta^2 = .02$ , which was further qualified by participants' ethnic group membership,  $F(4, 1060) = 2.92, p = .02, \eta^2 = .01$ . The means of the three way interaction between Target group, Type of responsibility, and Ethnic group membership are shown in Table 3. Overall, the hypotheses on the type of responsibility were only partially supported. As expected (H2b), Turkish participants,

perceived the third parties as more responsible for the instigation than for the consequences of the conflict,  $t(189) = 2.86, p = .005$ . However, Kurdish participants perceived third parties to be equally responsible for the instigation as for the consequences of the conflict,  $t(77) = .02, p = .99$ . Both groups attributed less responsibility to the PKK for the instigation than for the consequences of violence, but this difference was greater for Kurds ( $M_D = -.44, SE = .17$ ) than for Turks ( $M_D = -.14, SE = .07$ ),  $F(1, 266) = 3.75, p = .054, \eta^2 = .014$ . Except for this finding which supports the hypothesis, there was no other evidence that Turkish and Kurdish respondents perceived the ingroup targets as less responsible for the instigation than for the consequences, or that they perceived the outgroup targets as more responsible for the consequences than for the instigation of conflict.

### 3.4.2 Who Do Turks and Kurds Believe Suffered Due to the Conflict?

To assess the relation between group membership and the perceived amount of harm inflicted on the ingroup and on the outgroup (H3), I conducted mixed ANOVAs with Target of harm (ingroup vs. outgroup) as the within-subject factor and participants' Ethnic group membership (Turkish vs. Kurdish) as the between-subject factor. Each indicator of harm (i.e., casualty estimates and economic harm) served as the dependent measure.

The results indicated the same pattern of effects across both indicators of harm. The results of these analyses are presented below.

For casualty estimates, as predicted by H3, there was a main effect of Target of harm,  $F(1, 248) = 68.72, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$ , such that a higher percentage of victims in the conflict was estimated to be ingroup members ( $M = 60.07, SE = 1.35$ ) as compared to

outgroup members ( $M = 38.72$ ,  $SE = 1.32$ ). The results also yielded an unexpected Target group X Ethnic group membership interaction,  $F(1, 267) = 76.11$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .22$ . Kurdish respondents estimated the percentage of innocent ingroup victims ( $M = 69.92$ ,  $SE = 2.26$ ) to be higher than the percentage of outgroup victims ( $M = 29.99$ ,  $SE = 2.21$ ),  $t(73) = 9.42$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, Turkish respondents' estimates of ingroup (i.e., victims of Turkish origin) ( $M = 50.23$ ,  $SE = 1.47$ ) and outgroup victims (i.e., victims of Kurdish origin) ( $M = 47.46$ ,  $SE = 1.43$ ), were not significantly different from each other,  $t(176) = .98$ ,  $p = .33$ .

Similarly, for the economic harm indicator, there was a main effect of Target group,  $F(1, 267) = 108.62$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .29$ , such that the harm inflicted on the ingroup ( $M = 5.20$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) was perceived as more severe than the harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $M = 3.85$ ,  $SE = .11$ ). The result also revealed a Target group X Ethnic group membership,  $F(1, 248) = 52.03$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .17$  (see Figure 4), such that Kurdish respondents perceived the amount of harm inflicted on them ( $M = 5.70$ ,  $SE = .13$ ) as more severe than the harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $M = 3.23$ ,  $SE = .19$ ),  $t(76) = 10.76$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, Turkish respondents' perceived amount of harm inflicted on the ingroup ( $M = 4.69$ ,  $SE = .08$ ) was not different from the harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $M = 4.47$ ,  $SE = .12$ ),  $t(192) = 1.62$ ,  $p = .11$ .

### 3.4.3 Do Turks and Kurds Frame the Conflict Differently?

To test H4 on the role of group membership on conflict framing, a 4 (Conflict framing: PKK–state vs. PKK–citizens vs. state–citizens vs. ethnic conflict) X 2 (Ethnic group membership: Turks vs. Kurds) mixed ANOVA with Conflict framing as the within subject variable and Ethnic group membership as the between subject variable was



conducted. The degree of endorsement of each conflict frame was the dependent measure. Supporting H4, the results yielded an interaction between Conflict framing and Ethnic group membership,  $F(3, 798) = 40.56, p < .001, \eta^2 = .13$ . Turks perceived the conflict primarily as between the state and the PKK ( $M = 3.39, SE = .06$ ), while Kurds perceived the conflict as equally between the state and the PKK ( $M = 2.91, SE = .14$ ) and between the state and its citizens ( $M = 2.49, SE = .16$ ) (see Figure 5). Additionally, supporting H4a-b, Turks relative to Kurds endorsed a stronger terrorism framing (PKK vs. state:  $t(270) = 3.41, p = .001$ ; PKK vs. citizens:  $t(267) = 5.87, p < .001$ ), and a weaker minority issue framing,  $t(269) = -7.18, p < .001$ . However, there was no difference between the two groups in the degree to which they endorsed the ethnic conflict framing.

#### 3.4.4 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Turks' and Kurds' Construals of the Conflict?

First, the strength of ethnic and national identification and their relationship were examined for each group. Then, a series of regression analyses were conducted with ethnic and national identification as the predictors and each construal measure as the dependent variable.

##### 3.4.4.1 Ethnic and National Identification

Kurds endorsed a stronger ethnic identification ( $M = 4.20, SD = 1.38$ ) than Turks ( $M = 3.65, SD = 1.55$ )  $t(272) = 2.75, p = .006$ , but a weaker national identification ( $M = 2.26, SD = 1.34$ ) than Turks ( $M = 4.09, SD = 1.46$ ), and  $t(272) = -9.66, p < .001$  for ethnic and national identification respectively (see Figure 6). As predicted, whereas



ethnic and national identification were highly correlated for Turks ( $r = .76$ ), there was no relationship between the two types of identification for Kurds ( $r = .09$ ).

Due to the high overlap between ethnic and national identification for Turks, the two types of identification (ethnic and national) could not be included simultaneously as predictors in regression analyses, due to multicollinearity concerns. In contrast, for Kurds, there was no overlap between ethnic and national identification, therefore, the effect of one type of identification was not affected by the other type. In other words, for Kurds, whether ethnic and national identification were included simultaneously in the same regression analysis vs. examined separately in different regression analyses, the results were the same. Based on this, and to parallel the analyses with ethnic Turks, here I present the results of a series of regression analyses that include either ethnic or national identification as the main predictor. Additional predictors include ethnic group membership, and the interaction between group identification and ethnic group membership.

#### 3.4.4.2 The Role of Ethnic Identification on Construals of Conflict

##### 3.4.4.2.1 Attributions of Responsibility

The effect of ethnic identification on attributions of responsibility (H5) was assessed by conducting regression analyses with ethnic identification, ethnic group membership, and their interaction as predictors. Each attribution of responsibility measure served as the dependent variable. The effect of identification was tested separately for ingroup and outgroup measures.

The effects of ethnic and national identification revealed the same pattern of relationships across Type of responsibility (i.e., for instigation as for the consequences of

the events). Therefore, similar to Study 1, the attribution measures were collapsed across Type of responsibility for the PKK ( $\alpha = .89$ ), the state ( $\alpha = .94$ ), Turks ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Kurds ( $\alpha = .88$ ), and third parties ( $\alpha = .95$ ). Only the combined analyses are presented.

The effects for ethnic identification are presented in Table 4. Supporting Hypothesis 5, across in- and outgroup targets there was a significant interaction between ethnic group membership and ethnic identification (see Table 4). To clarify the interaction effects, ethnic identification was entered as a predictor of each target of attribution separately for Turkish and Kurdish participants. The results of these regression analyses are summarized in Table 5. As expected, for ethnic Turks, the more they identified with their ethnic group, the more responsibility they attributed to the PKK, the Kurds and third parties, but the less responsibility they attributed to the state and to Turks (supporting H5a). Conversely, for ethnic Kurds, the more they identified with their ethnic group, the more responsibility they attributed to the state, to Turks, and third parties, but the less responsibility they attributed to the PKK (supporting H5b). The strength of Kurdish identification was not associated with attributions of responsibility to Kurds.

#### 3.4.4.2.2 Severity of Harm

The same procedure as for attributions of responsibility was used to assess the effect of ethnic identification on perceived severity of harm on the ingroup and on the outgroup. Specifically, regression analyses were conducted with ethnic identification, ethnic group membership, and their interaction as predictors. Each severity of harm measure (i.e., casualty estimate and economic harm) served as a dependent variable. The effect of identification was tested separately for ingroup and outgroup measures. The

results of these regression analyses for each measure of ingroup and outgroup harm are summarized in Table 6.

For the economic harm, as predicted (H6), the results revealed a main effect of ethnic identification, such that the more respondents identified with their ethnic group, the more harm they thought had been inflicted on their ingroup and the less harm they thought had been inflicted on the outgroup. Although the interaction between ethnic group membership and ethnic identification was not significant, regression analyses conducted separately for each ethnic group revealed that stronger ethnic identification was associated with greater perceived ingroup harm,  $\beta = .23$ ,  $t(187) = 3.23$ ,  $p = .001$ , and lower outgroup harm,  $\beta = -.26$ ,  $t(187) = -3.73$ ,  $p < .001$ , only for Turks, but not for Kurds,  $\beta = .11$ ,  $t(75) = .96$ ,  $p = .34$  for ingroup harm, and  $\beta = -.18$ ,  $t(75) = -1.67$ ,  $p = .10$  for outgroup harm.

For casualty estimates, the results yielded a main effect of ethnic identification and an unexpected ethnic identification X ethnic group membership interaction both for ingroup and outgroup casualty estimates (see Figure 7). To clarify these interaction effects, ethnic identification was used to predict each measure separately for Turks and Kurds. For Turks, stronger ethnic identification was associated with a higher estimate of ingroup casualties,  $\beta = .36$ ,  $t(174) = 5.14$ ,  $p < .001$ , and with a lower estimate of outgroup casualties  $\beta = -.40$ ,  $t(174) = -5.81$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, for ethnic Kurds there was no relationship between ethnic identification and estimates of ingroup  $\beta = .09$ ,  $t(74) = .74$ ,  $p > .05$ , or outgroup casualties,  $\beta = -.08$ ,  $t(73) = -.70$ ,  $p > .05$ . Thus, these results only lend partial support for Hypothesis 6, in that the prediction holds only for Turks, but not for Kurds.

### 3.4.4.3 The Role of Ethnic vs. National Identification on Construals of Conflict.

#### 3.4.4.3.1 Attributions of Responsibility

The same procedure as for ethnic identification was used to test the effect of national identification on attributions of responsibility. A summary of the results of the effects of national identification are presented in Table 7. Unlike for ethnic identification, the interaction between ethnic group membership and national identification was not significant for any target group (see Table 7). Lending support to Hypothesis 7, national identification had similar effects both for Turkish and Kurdish respondents, such that the more respondents identified with the national group, the more responsibility they attributed to the PKK, the Kurds, and the third parties, and the less responsibility they attributed to the state and to Turks. The results of separate regression analyses for each ethnic group with national identification as the predictor and each target of attribution as the dependent measure are shown side by side with the effects of ethnic identification in Table 5. For Turks, national identification predicted the same effect as ethnic identification (supporting H7a), whereas for Kurds, national identification had opposite effects to ethnic identification (supporting H7b).

#### 3.4.4.3.2 Severity of Harm

The same procedures were used to test the effect of national identification on perceived severity of harm. A summary of the results is presented in Table 8. As expected, there was an interaction effect between national identification and ethnic group membership for both indicators of harm. To clarify the interaction effects, national identification was used to predict each measure of harm separately for Turks and Kurds. For Turks, as expected (H8), national identification paralleled the effects of ethnic



identification. Specifically, the more ethnic Turks identified with their national group, the more economic harm they perceived to be experienced by the ingroup,  $\beta = .26$ ,  $t(190) = 3.70$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the less harm they perceived to be experienced by the outgroup,  $\beta = -.33$ ,  $t(190) = -4.73$ ,  $p < .001$ . Likewise, stronger national identification for ethnic Turks, was associated with higher estimates of the percentage of ingroup casualties  $\beta = .36$ ,  $t(174) = 5.14$ ,  $p < .001$ , and lower estimates of the percentage of outgroup casualties,  $\beta = -.46$ ,  $t(174) = -6.77$ ,  $p < .001$ .

By contrast, for Kurds, as expected (H8), national identification predicted less harm experienced by their ingroup and more harm experienced by the outgroup. Specifically, the more ethnic Kurds identified with the national identification, the less economic harm they perceived to be experienced by the ingroup,  $\beta = -.27$ ,  $t(75) = -2.44$ ,  $p = .02$ , and the more economic harm they perceived to be experienced by the outgroup,  $\beta = .35$ ,  $t(75) = 3.25$ ,  $p = .002$  (see Figure 8). Similarly, for Kurds, stronger national identification predicted lower estimates of the percentage of ingroup casualties,  $\beta = -.38$ ,  $t(72) = -3.45$ ,  $p = .001$ , but higher estimates for outgroup casualties,  $\beta = .38$ ,  $t(72) = 3.46$ ,  $p = .001$ .

#### 3.4.4.4 The Role of Ethnic vs. National Identification on Conflict Framing.

To test Hypothesis 9 on the effect of ethnic identification on conflict framing, four regression analyses were conducted with each conflict frame as the dependent variable. Results are summarized in Table 9. The results revealed an interaction effect of ethnic group membership and ethnic identification on minority issue framing. Table 10 summarizes the results of the effects of ethnic identification on conflict framing separately for Turks and Kurds. Specifically, the more Turks identified with their ethnic



group, the less they viewed the conflict as between the state and the citizens (i.e., minority issue), whereas the more Kurds identified with their ethnic group, the more they perceived the conflict as between the state and the citizens (see Table 10).

As expected, the analysis did not yield an interaction effect of ethnic group membership and ethnic identification on terrorism framing. However, for ethnic Turks, stronger ethnic identification was associated with a higher endorsement of a conflict between the PKK and the citizens. Whereas for ethnic Kurds, stronger ethnic identification was not related to the endorsement of the terrorism frame (framing the conflict as between the PKK and Turkish citizens).

The analyses revealed a main effect of ethnic identification on the endorsement of ethnic conflict frame (i.e., a conflict between Turkish and Kurdish civilians) and of a conflict between the state and the PKK. Specifically, for both groups, ethnic identification was related to stronger endorsement of an ethnic conflict frame, and to a stronger endorsement of a conflict between the state and the PKK (supporting H9c).

The same procedures were used to assess the effect of national identification. As expected (H10) the effect of national identification showed the same trend as ethnic identification for Turks, but the opposite trend of ethnic identification for Kurds. The separate effects of national identification on each conflict frame for Turks and Kurds are summarized in Table 10, side by side with the effects of ethnic identification. Specifically, the more respondents (Turks and Kurds) identified with the national group, the more they endorsed a terrorism frame (H10a) and the less they endorsed a minority issue frame (i.e., a conflict between the state and the citizens) (H10b). Whereas for Turks, national identification was also related to a stronger endorsement of an ethnic

conflict frame and of a conflict between the PKK and the state, for ethnic Kurds there was no relationship between national identification and these dimensions.

### 3.5 Discussion

#### 3.5.1 How Do Turks and Kurds Construe the Turkish-Kurdish Conflict in Turkey?

Study 2 extended the findings of Study 1 by assessing and comparing the construals of group members from two sides of a conflict, and by examining whether two types of identification (national and ethnic) influence these construals. As in Study 1, I examined attributions of responsibility, perceived severity of harm, and additionally assessed each side's framing of the conflict.

First, supporting H1, the findings revealed that Turks placed more responsibility on the PKK than on the state, while Kurds placed more responsibility on the state than on the PKK. Similarly, each group attributed more responsibility to outgroup members in general as compared to ingroup members. Respondents attributed more responsibility to third parties than to Turkish and Kurdish people. Notably, both Turks and Kurds placed more responsibility on state institutions and insurgent groups than on the general population (ordinary Turks and Kurds), regardless of whether they were associated with the ingroup or the outgroup. These findings suggested that respondents might not attribute responsibility to the group as a whole, rather they differentiate among distinct subgroups within the in- or outgroup. This distinction might have important implications for the study of intergroup conflict. Intergroup tensions are likely to exacerbate if the outgroup as a whole is held responsible for the negative behaviors of outgroup extremists or other subgroups. In the present study, it was assumed that the PKK and the state are protagonists of the Kurdish and the Turkish groups respectively. However, it is possible

that respondents themselves perceived the PKK and the state as separate entities, rather than a part of each group. In other words, it is not clear how Kurds and Turks perceive the state and the insurgent groups such as the PKK vis-à-vis the ethnic in- and outgroups. It is important to replicate these findings with subgroups which, from the respondents' perspective, are perceived as part of the ingroup or the outgroup.

The findings did not lend support for the hypotheses regarding type of responsibility (instigation vs. consequences) (H2). It is possible that these hypotheses are not applicable in this particular context of conflict. The predictions about distinct types of responsibility (i.e., instigation vs. consequences of events) were based on the assumption that the ingroup has harmed the outgroup, in which case group members in order to justify ingroup's harmdoing would be more inclined to place responsibility on the outgroup for instigating the events. However, in the current study, respondents did not perceive the conflict as involving ethnic tensions between ordinary Turks and Kurds, but as between the PKK and the state.

Third, with regard to severity of harm, as predicted, Kurdish respondents perceived the harm inflicted on them to be greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup. But, Turkish respondents perceived equal amount of harm inflicted on their ingroup and the outgroup, thus not lending support to the ingroup favoritism hypothesis. However, these findings are meaningful to the extent that Turks perceived the conflict as a terrorism problem. Terrorism would affect everyone equally, regardless of their ethnic group membership.

In this study I assessed conflict framing in order to examine whether two sides in a conflict have similar or different understanding of what the conflict is about. Each

conflict frame posits two different groups as the primary parties in the conflict. For example, if the conflict is perceived as a minority issue, the state and the Kurdish citizens would be the primary parties in conflict. However if the conflict is perceived as an ethnic conflict, then Kurds and Turks as ethnic groups would be the primary parties in conflict. The differences in conflict framing were notable. Overall, Turks were more likely to view the conflict as a terrorism issue (i.e., as a conflict between the state and the PKK), whereas Kurds were more likely to view the conflict as a minority rights issue (i.e., a conflict either between the state and the PKK or the state and the citizens). The extent to which respondents view the conflict purely as a disagreement between ordinary citizens of the two ethnic groups was low for both groups.

### 3.5.2 Do Individual Differences in Ethnic and National Identification Affect Construals of the Conflict?

Overall, individual differences in the strength of ethnic identification had an important influence on construals of the conflict across all three dependent variables. For both ethnic groups, stronger ethnic identification was associated with ingroup favoritism. For example, stronger ethnic identification was related to (a) attributing more responsibility to outgroup targets and less responsibility to ingroup targets, (b) more harm perceived to be inflicted on the ingroup and less harm perceived to be inflicted on the outgroup, as well as to (c) endorsement of conflict frames that portray the ingroup in a positive light.

For Turks, national identification was strongly correlated with ethnic identification, and consequently it paralleled the effects of ethnic identification on construals of conflict. However, for Kurds, national identification was not related to



ethnic identification; that is, the degree to which Kurdish respondents identified with their ethnic group was not associated with the degree to which they identified with the Turkish nation. As predicted, for Kurdish respondents, identification with the Turkish nation produced *outgroup* favoritism (e.g., perceiving more ingroup responsibility and less outgroup responsibility for the conflict). These results are in line with prior literature with minority and majority groups in multiethnic states. For example, Brewer (1991) claimed that policies of national assimilation are threatening to minority groups and lead minority group members to strengthen their ties with the minority group. Similarly, perceived ingroup discrimination (Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, & Solheim, 2009; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002) and perceived rejection (Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007) drive minority group members to disidentify (i.e., distance themselves) with the national group. In this line, the degree to which Kurds identified with their ethnic group was stronger than the degree to which Turks identified with their ethnic group. The current research went a step further in showing that ethnic and national identification had opposite effects on minority group members' (i.e., Kurds) construals of conflict.

Overall, Study 1-2 provided strong support for the effect of ingroup identification on construals of the conflict. Moreover, Study 2 investigated the impact of different types of identification demonstrating that ethnic and national identification for minority groups might have opposite effects on construals of the conflict. However, it should be noted that in both contexts (i.e., of Studies 1-2) the violence is not ongoing. The current disputes between Turks and Armenians primarily concern the interpretations of the past and despite the strained diplomatic ties between Turkey and Armenia, there has been no ongoing violence between the two people. In the Turkish-Kurdish conflict, despite the



continuing inequalities between the two groups' socioeconomic status and other major post-conflict issues (e.g., the return of internally displaced people to their villages), the violence has diminished in recent years. Research on intractable conflicts (see Bar-Tal, 2000, 2003) and intergroup threat (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2004; Roccas, Klar, & Liviatan, 2006; Rothgerber, 1997) suggests that the predictive value of individual differences is likely to diminish when the threat to the ingroup is high and when violence is ongoing. In such a case, ascribed membership in a group (rather than individual differences in psychological identification) is likely to be the main predictor of perceptions and judgments relevant to intergroup outcomes. In a similar vein, at an individual level of analysis, the strength of the situation moderates the effect of the individual differences on behavior such that this effect is weaker for strong situations (Mischel, 1977). Thus, group members may exhibit homogenous construals of an intergroup conflict (regardless of individual differences in ingroup identification) when violence and threat are ongoing. As such, it is important to test these principles of ingroup favoritism and ingroup identification in a wider array of contexts. The strength of ingroup identification might be an important predictor of construals of past conflict *only* in contexts where violence and threat have diminished. One of the goals of the next study was to investigate the relationship between ingroup identification and construals of violence in the context of an ongoing conflict characterized by severe violence between groups.

## CHAPTER 4

### STUDY 3: THE ETHNIC CONFLICT BETWEEN HUTUS AND TUTSIS IN BURUNDI

#### 4.1 Introduction

The current study aimed to extend the research in a different context of intergroup conflict, the ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis in Burundi. The conflict in Burundi is characterized by extreme forms of violence between Hutus and Tutsis since early 1960s, and the conflict is ongoing. Hutus have been the main target of violence during the conflict; however since 1993, the violence has been mutual with massacres carried out by both sides. It was only very recently, in March 2009 (after the data collection for this study had ended), that the major Hutu rebel movement (FNL, Forces Nationales de Liberation) started to demobilize combatants.

In addition to extending the previous research in a context of ongoing conflict and violence, I expanded upon the findings of Study 2 in three other important ways.

First, Study 2 investigated attributions of responsibility to targets aligned with the two ethnic groups (e.g., the Turkish state with the Turkish ethnic group; and, the PKK with the Kurdish ethnic group). However, it was not clear whether respondents themselves perceived the PKK and the state as protagonists that belong to the in- or outgroup. Therefore, in the current study, instead of specifying the particular subgroups, I distinguished more broadly between ‘extremist groups’ and ‘people in general’ (both of the in- and outgroup). In this way, each subgroup was explicitly included within the

ingroup's or outgroup's representation. As the focus of this study was on different ingroup and outgroup targets, the perceived role of third parties was not examined.

Second, I extended the previous investigation of attributions of responsibility by assessing the relationship between ingroup responsibility and legitimization of ingroup's harmdoing. Studies 1 and 2 demonstrated that group members acknowledged some ingroup responsibility both for the instigation and for the consequences of events. In addition group members might be motivated to assign less responsibility to the ingroup for the instigation than for the consequences of conflict. As such, the ingroup's engagement in acts of violence is likely to be perceived as self-defense. The implication is that acknowledgement of ingroup responsibility does not inevitably imply accepting liability for the harm done. Sometimes, due to social reality features, it might not be feasible to defer ingroup's responsibility, and its reduction might not be deemed sufficient. In these instances, group members might acknowledge ingroup's responsibility, but at the same time legitimize the violence. For example, governments accept responsibility for their military interventions but they also claim that these interventions serve humanitarian purposes, are carried out as a last resort, or because the enemy is dangerous (Cohrs et al., 2003). This may be particularly likely for ongoing conflicts rather than past conflict because people don't have necessary distance from the conflict to have "cooled down" sufficiently.

Consistent with this argument, some research suggests that claiming responsibility and blameworthiness are conceptually different processes (Shaver & Drown, 1986). For example, early research on harmdoing at the individual level (e.g., Davis & Jones, 1960; Glass, 1964) demonstrated that although participants who were assigned by

experimenters to cause harm to a victim were aware that they did the actual inflicting, they attributed the blame for the injustice either to the experimenter or to the situation. Shaver (1985) in his theory of attributions of blame elaborates different dimensions and strategies that are useful to distinguish moral responsibility from blameworthiness. One important strategy that alters one's blameworthiness, but not one's responsibility, is the perceived justification for the harmdoing (e.g., a perpetrator group might argue that although the act was reprehensible, it served a larger social purpose) (Shaver, 1985, p. 163). Based on this, in the current study, I explicitly assessed justification of ingroup's harmdoing (i.e., the degree to which group members believed that ingroup violent acts were in self-defense, and were a reaction to provocation by the outgroup). A negative relationship between ingroup responsibility and the degree of legitimization would indicate acceptance of liability for ingroup harmdoing, while a positive relationship between ingroup responsibility and the legitimization of ingroup harmdoing would indicate denial of ingroup's liability.

Finally, the current study expanded assessment of the perceived severity of harm by adding a new measure that has been used recently in the literature to assess competitive victimhood (Noor et al., 2008). Competitive victimhood is defined as the degree to which the ingroup is believed to have suffered more than the outgroup (Noor et al., 2008). The development of competitive victimhood as a construct stemmed from research showing that groups in conflict exclusively focus on their victimhood, and this preoccupation with one's victimhood leads to a competition over who has suffered more harm (Nadler & Saguy, 2004). Competitive victimhood have been found to be associated



with negative intergroup outcomes, such as less empathy for the outgroup or less willingness for forgiveness (Noor et al., 2008).

In the first two studies I assessed the severity of harm perceived to be inflicted on the ingroup and on the outgroup separately, and then, I compared them to find out whether group members perceived the harm inflicted on their ingroup as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup. Different from this approach, competitive victimhood implies a direct intergroup comparison of the degree of suffering. The measure asks respondents to engage in those cross-group comparisons of harm suffered, but it does not provide information about the degree to which group members believe each group has suffered. Competitive victimhood might provide a measurement advantage in contexts such as Burundi where both groups have suffered a great deal. The severe extent of victimization might lead to ceiling effects in the measures of perceived severity of harm used in the first two studies. Therefore, in the current study, in addition to the previous measures, I also included competitive victimhood to assess perceived severity of harm.

Below, I provide a description of the conflict in Burundi.

#### 4.1.1 A Description of the Conflict in Burundi

Burundi, a small country in eastern Africa with a population of six million, gained its independence from colonial Belgium in 1962. Since its independence, Burundi has had a turbulent history of violent ethnic conflict. The most cited statistics for Burundi's ethnic composition are 85% Hutus, 14% Tutsis and 1% Twas (Lemarchand, 1994, p. 6). The inhabitants of Burundi are referred to as Barundi (plural) and as Murundi (singular). The Belgian colonial power and Catholic missionaries in Burundi viewed Tutsis as superior to Hutus and used racial ideologies to make changes in political, social and



cultural institutions, thus limiting access to power and wealth only to Tutsis<sup>6</sup> (Makoba & Ndura, 2006; Mamdani, 2001). The Tutsi minority has been mainly in control since the colonial period, whereas Hutus have been systematically excluded from all positions of power and responsibility (Lemarchand, 1994, pp. xiv). Since its independence in 1962, Burundi has been the scene of violent conflict, including large scale mass killings mostly by the Tutsi gendarmerie toward Hutus in 1965, 1972, 1988, and 1991 (Daley, 2006; Lemarchand, 1994; Turner, 2005; Wolpe & McDonald, et al., 2004). In 1993, a civil war began with the assassination of Ndadaye, the first democratically elect Hutu president. This event led to revenge-oriented attacks by Hutus on Tutsis, which in turn led the Tutsi military to counter-attack Hutu communities (Lemarchand, 1994). After 1993, Burundi was involved in a series of ethnic massacres and selective genocide (Makoba & Ndura, 2006). The extent of victimization in Burundi has been enormous. Since the start of a civil war in 1993, it is estimated that about 300,000 people were killed; 800,000 were forced to flee the country; and about 700,000 were internally displaced (Daley, 2006; Wolpe & McDonald, et al., 2004). Lemarchand (1994, p. xi), states that “Nowhere else in Africa has so much violence killed so many people on so many occasions in so small a space as in Burundi.” Burundi has been going through a political transition since the start of the Arusha Accords in 1998, although the violence has continued. An internationally brokered power-sharing agreement between Tutsi dominated government and Hutu rebels in 2003 led to democratic elections in 2005 in which Hutus and Tutsis held respectively 60% and 40% of the posts in the government and national assembly (Lemarchand, 2006).

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<sup>6</sup> European colonialists perceived Tutsis to have Semitic and Aryan traits (Mamdani, 2001)

In addition to the bloodshed, Burundi is listed among the world's poorest countries; its economy has been devastated by the long lasting conflict.

#### 4.1.2 Conflict Framing in Burundi

Hutus and Tutsis have different narratives of the conflict. Lemarchand (1994, pp. 20 - 30) describes the two narratives as follows. For Hutus, the ethnic conflict is a continuation of historical antagonisms since the precolonial period. Hutus were the oppressed majority in the hands of the Tutsi minority whom they view as foreigners who migrated to Burundi from the North. For Tutsis on the other hand, the ethnic conflict in Burundi is a remnant of the colonial rule which instilled ethnic divisions. Tutsis deny the oppression of Hutus by Tutsis and look back at the precolonial times as an inspiration for social harmony. "There is no such a thing as a Tutsi minority, only a reactionary minority; there is no Hutu-Tutsi conflict, only a "gigantic" imperialist plot" (Lemarchand, 1994, p. 28). Lemarchand (1994) argues that Tutsis' way of maintaining the privileged position in society is by denying the importance of ethnic identities, including the Tutsi identity, thus legitimizing the rule of the minority. Overall, each side's beliefs about the conflict provide an ingroup favoring narrative in the current context of the conflict.

Based on this, I predicted that Hutus would be more likely than Tutsis to acknowledge ethnic tensions in Burundi (i.e., a conflict between ordinary Hutus and Tutsis), and a conflict between the state (which has been represented mostly by Tutsis) and its citizens (i.e., Hutus). Hutus and Tutsis would equally perceive the conflict as between extremist groups. Tutsis, as a way to deny ethnic tensions, might be more likely to endorse a conflict between extremist groups and citizens (both Hutus and Tutsis).

## 4.2 Hypotheses

### 4.2.1 Who do Hutus and Tutsis Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

The predictions with regard to Type of responsibility (responsibility for the instigation vs. responsibility for the consequences), Ethnic group membership, and Target group follow from Studies 1-2. Specifically,

H1: Similar to the previous studies, I predicted a main effect of Target group such that both groups (i.e., Hutu and Tutsi respondents) would attribute less responsibility for the violent conflict to their ingroup (both extremists and general population) and more responsibility to the outgroup.

H2: I expected an interaction between Target group and Type of responsibility such that, respondents would perceive the ingroup targets as less responsible for the instigation than for the consequences of the events (H2a); by contrast, they would perceive the outgroup targets as more responsible for the consequences than for the instigation of the events (H2b).

The target groups in the current study included the ‘extremists’ and ‘people in general’.

H3: I predicted a main effect of Type of target, such that more responsibility was expected to be attributed to the extremist groups than to the general population.

In addition, here I also explored the relationship between ingroup responsibility and legitimization of ingroup acts of violence.

#### 4.2.2 Who Do Hutus and Tutsis Believe Suffered due to the Conflict?

H4: Following the Hypotheses in Study 2, I predicted a main effect of Target group such that both groups were expected to perceive the harm inflicted on the ingroup as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup.

#### 4.2.3 Do Hutus and Tutsis Frame the Conflict Differently?

Similar to Study 2, four conflict frames were assessed in the current study. Here the parties in the conflict were Hutus, Tutsis, the state, and extremist groups from each side.

H5: I predicted that respondents of both groups would perceive the conflict primarily as a as an ethnic conflict (i.e., perceiving the conflict as an interethnic conflict between Tutsis and Hutus).

H6: Furthermore, I predicted that Hutus would be more likely than Tutsis to endorse an ethnic conflict framing (i.e., a conflict between ordinary Hutus and Tutsis) (H6a), and a conflict between the state and its citizens (i.e., Hutus) (H6b). Whereas Tutsis would be more likely to endorse a conflict between extremist groups and citizens (H6c).

However, I did not expect differences between Hutus and Tutsis in the degree to which they would endorse a conflict between extremist groups.

#### 4.2.4 How Does Ethnic Identification Influence Hutus' and Tutsis' Construals of the Conflict<sup>7</sup>?

##### 4.2.4.1 Attributions of Responsibility

Similar to predictions in Studies 1 and 2, stronger ethnic identification was expected to be associated with less responsibility attributed to ingroup targets but more responsibility attributed to outgroup targets. Based on this,

H7: I predicted that for both groups, stronger ethnic identification should be associated with less responsibility attributed to the ingroup (H7a), but with more responsibility attributed to the outgroup (H7b).

##### 4.2.4.2 Severity of Harm

H8: For both groups, stronger ethnic identification should predict more harm perceived to be inflicted upon the ingroup (H8a), and less harm inflicted upon the outgroup (H8b). Furthermore, for both ethnic groups, stronger ethnic identification should be associated with higher ratings of competitive victimhood (H8c).

##### 4.2.4.3 Conflict Framing

I predicted that the strength of ingroup identification would enhance the group membership effects. Specifically,

H9: For Hutus, stronger ethnic identification should be associated with a heightened endorsement of an ethnic conflict frame (i.e., a conflict between Hutus and Tutsis) (H9a), and a conflict between the state and its citizens (H9b). Tutsis' ethnic

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<sup>7</sup> Following up on study 2, a measure of national identification was included, but because Burundian national identity was not related to either Hutu or Tutsi identities, no predictions were made about the effect of national identification. In fact, supplemental analyses showed that no significant relationships for any of the dependent variables were found beyond what was predicted for ethnic identification.



identification should exhibit the opposite effects in these dependent measures.

Additionally, for Tutsis, stronger ethnic identification should be associated with a heightened endorsement of a conflict between extremist groups and the general population (H9c). This relationship should be the opposite for Hutus.

### 4.3 Methods

#### 4.3.1 Participants

Participants were 121 (40 women, 81 men) undergraduate students and recent graduates of two different universities in Bujumbura. Fifty six participants identified themselves as ethnic Hutus, 58 as ethnic Tutsis, one as Twa, and six participants did not identify their ethnic group membership. For the purposes of this study, only the data of the participants that identified themselves as either Hutus or Tutsis are included in the analyses. The age of participants ranged from 18 to 36 ( $M = 26.3$ ,  $SD = 5.8$ ). Among the participants, 32.5% were from the capital Bujumbura, while the rest of the sample came from other regions of Burundi. The extent of victimization in the sample was considerably high. Based on self-reports, 38% of Hutus and 13% of Tutsis had personally experienced physical violence, and 65% of Hutus' and 34% of Tutsis' family members had experienced physical violence. Furthermore, 64% of Hutus and 53% of Tutsis had been displaced during the course of the conflict.

Respondents were awarded USD 2 each for their participation in the research,

#### 4.3.2 Survey Instrument

The procedures and questionnaires were similar to Study 2. At the beginning of the study participants were told that the questionnaire was about the conflict in Burundi from 1960s to the present. The questionnaire was structured in the same way as in Study

2. First, participants completed ingroup identification measures. Afterwards, they completed a set of measures assessing their construal of the conflict in Burundi since 1960s. At the end they provided demographic information (age, gender, region of origin, education, extent of victimization). The questionnaires were administered in French. All items were translated by two translators equally fluent in English and French. All the items were examined by Murundi research assistants to make sure that the items were appropriately adapted to the specific context and reflected the intended meaning to people in Burundi.

#### 4.3.2.1 Attributions of Responsibility

One item each assessed the amount of responsibility attributed to each target group (extremist Tutsi groups, extremist Hutu groups, the Tutsi people in general, the Hutu people in general) separately for instigation and for consequences of the violent events in Burundi. All items were assessed using 6 – point scales (0 = no responsibility; 5 = complete responsibility).

#### 4.3.2.2 Legitimization of Ingroup Harmdoing

A measure for the legitimization of past ingroup violence scale was adopted by Noor et al. (2008). The scale included four items: (1) Most of the violent acts that were carried out on behalf of my ethnic group against the other group were mainly for self-protection, (2) Sometimes my group was left with no other choice but to respond with violence against the other group, (3) Members of my group committed acts of violence because they were provoked into them by the other group, (4) Most of the violent acts carried out by my group against the other group are not justified (reversed item). The last item was dropped due to low item-scale correlations. The scores of the remaining three

items were averaged to form a scale of justification of violence. The scale revealed very good reliability for both groups ( $\alpha = .82$  for Hutus and  $\alpha = .74$  for Tutsis).

#### 4.3.2.3 Severity of Harm

The perceived severity of harm measures in Study 2 (i.e., economic harm and casualty estimates) were adapted to assess the perceived harm inflicted on Hutus and on Tutsis. In addition, in a different part of the questionnaire, the degree of competitive victimhood was assessed as an additional measure of the severity of harm. The competitive victimhood scale was adopted by Noor et al. (2008). The scale includes four items<sup>8</sup>: (1) Over the last 40 years of conflict in Burundi, my ethnic group has not suffered more than other ethnic groups, (2) Overall, the proportion of trauma due to the conflict in Burundi is more severe for my ethnic group than for other groups, (3) On average, more harm has been done to my group than to other groups, and (4) Overall, victims in my community have not received adequate attention to their needs compared to victims in the other community. Because of the low item-scale correlations, the last item was dropped. The three-item competitive victimhood scale revealed good reliabilities for both groups ( $\alpha = .70$ , for Hutus and  $\alpha = .83$  for Tutsis).

#### 4.3.2.4 Conflict Framing

The framing of conflict was assessed in a similar way to Study 2; however the items were modified to the context of the conflict in Burundi. Four items assessed the degree to which participants perceived the conflict as between Hutus and Tutsis (ethnic conflict framing), as between extremist groups, between the state and the citizens, or

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<sup>8</sup> The content of one item from the original scale by Noor et al. (2008), “On average, the areas that have been affected most by the troubles are those in which members of my community live”, was specific to the Northern Ireland conflict, so it was not included in the current study.

between the state and the extremist groups. All items were assessed in 5-point scales (0 = not at all; 4 = very much).

#### 4.3.2.5 Ingroup Identification

The same items as in the previous studies were adapted to assess ethnic and national identification in Burundi. The procedure was the same as in Study 2. That is, first, participants completed items assessing their identification with the national group (i.e., being a citizen of Burundi); then they completed a set of ingroup identification items assessing their ethnic identification. One national identification item was dropped due to its low correlation with the scale. Ethnic ( $\alpha = .83$  for Hutus and  $\alpha = .67$  for Tutsis) and national identification scales ( $\alpha = .79$  for Hutus and  $\alpha = .78$  for Tutsis) revealed good reliabilities.

### 4.4 Results

#### 4.4.1 Who Do Hutus and Tutsis Hold Responsible for the Conflict?

To test Hypotheses 1-3, a 2 (Target group: ingroup vs. outgroup) X 2 (Target type: extremist groups vs. group as a whole) X 2 (Type of responsibility: instigation vs. consequences) X 2 (Ethnic group membership: Hutus vs. Tutsis) mixed ANOVA was conducted with Target group, Target type, and Type of responsibility as within subject variables, and Ethnic group membership as the between subject factor.

Supporting Hypothesis 1, the analysis yielded a main effect of Target group,  $F(1, 101) = 51.78, p < .001, \eta^2 = .034$ , such that respondents of both groups attributed less responsibility to their ingroup, both extremists and the ingroup people in general, ( $M = 2.04, SE = .09$ ) relative to the outgroup ( $M = 2.96, SE = .10$ ). However, the results also yielded an unexpected interaction effect between Target group and Ethnic group



membership  $F(1, 101) = 3.60, p = .06, \eta^2 = .034$ . This interaction indicated that Tutsi participants attributed less responsibility to their ingroup ( $M = 1.84, SE = .13$ ) than did Hutu participants ( $M = 2.27, SE = .12$ ),  $t(111) = 2.36, p = .02$ . However, there was no difference between the amount of responsibility that each group attributed to the outgroup,  $t(111) = -1.02, p = .31$ . These results are notable considering that Tutsis were the major perpetrator of violence for most of the conflict, since 1960s until early 1990s.

The results also yielded a Target group X Type of responsibility interaction,  $F(1, 101) = 29.44, p < .001, \eta^2 = .23$  (see Figure 9). To clarify this interaction effect, I conducted pair wise  $t$  tests comparing the amount of responsibility attributed for the instigation versus the consequences of violent events. Attributions of responsibility were collapsed across type of target (i.e., extremists and general population) to form one score for the ingroup target and another for the outgroup target. These comparisons were conducted separately for each type of target group (ingroup vs. outgroup). Specifically, supporting H2a, the ingroup was perceived as less responsible for instigating the events ( $M = 1.72, SE = .11$ ) than for their consequences ( $M = 2.33, SE = .11$ ),  $t(109) = -5.98, p < .001$ . By contrast, the outgroup was perceived as more responsible for instigating the events ( $M = 3.08, SE = .11$ ) than for their consequences ( $M = 2.83, SE = .11$ ),  $t(107) = 2.32, p = .022$  (supporting H2b).

As predicted by Hypothesis 3, the analysis revealed a main effect of Type of target,  $F(1, 101) = 111.85, p < .001, \eta^2 = .53$ , such that both groups attributed less responsibility to the general population of both groups ( $M = 1.65, SE = .12$ ) relative to the extremists within the groups ( $M = 3.35, SE = .09$ ).



The results also revealed two unexpected effects. First, the analysis yielded a Target group X Type of target interaction,  $F(1, 101) = 4.66, p = .03, \eta^2 = .044$  (see Figure 10). All pair-wise comparisons in this interaction were significant at  $p < .002$ . The interaction indicated that the difference in the responsibility attributed to ingroup people in general versus extremist ingroup members ( $M_D = -1.59, SE = .15$ ) was smaller than the difference in the responsibility attributed to outgroup people in general versus to extremist outgroup members ( $M_D = -1.79, SE = .17$ ). These results might suggest that the ingroup as a whole is perceived as more cohesive than the outgroup. Second, the results also revealed a Type of responsibility X Type of target interaction,  $F(1, 101) = 11.72, p = .001, \eta^2 = .104$ , such that both groups viewed the general population (Tutsis and Hutus) as less responsible for the instigation ( $M = 1.39, SE = .13$ ) than for the consequences of events ( $M = 1.90, SE = 3.28$ ),  $t(107) = 4.04, p < .001$ , but they attributed more responsibility (and an equal amount of it) to extremist groups on both sides for the instigation ( $M = 3.42, SE = .10$ ) and consequences of the violent events ( $M = 3.28, SE = .11$ ),  $t(106) = -1.56, p = .12$  (see Figure 11).

#### 4.4.1.1 Ingroup Responsibility and Legitimization of Ingroup Harmdoing

Hutus and Tutsis did not differ in the degree to which they legitimized the violence carried out by the ingroup,  $t(111) = -.35, p = .73$ , however both groups' legitimization of violence was above the mid-point of the scale ( $M = 4.32, SD = 1.47$  and  $M = 4.42, SD = 1.28$  for Hutus and Tutsis respectively). To assess the subjective meaning of ingroup responsibility, correlations were conducted between legitimization of ingroup violence and attributions of responsibility (to the ingroup people in general and to ingroup extremists) separately for Hutu and Tutsi respondents. As the same pattern of

relations emerged for responsibility for the instigation as for the consequences of events, the scores of the two types of responsibility were averaged, and the analyses were conducted again. Overall, I expected a negative relation between ingroup responsibility and legitimization of the harm. Interestingly, the more responsibility Hutu respondents attributed to ingroup people in general the more they legitimized ingroup violence ( $r = .33, p = .014$ ); by contrast, the more responsibility they attributed to ingroup extremists the less they justified the ingroup violence ( $r = -.37, p = .005$ ). So, for Hutus, viewing the ingroup people as responsible for the violence would not translate to ingroup blame because higher responsibility is related to more legitimization, but the opposite is true for ingroup extremists. For Tutsi respondents, the relationship between legitimization of ingroup violence and ingroup attributions of responsibility was negative, but did not reach significance, both for the ingroup people in general ( $r = -.17, p = .19$ ) and for ingroup extremists ( $r = -.18, p = .18$ ).

#### 4.4.2 Who Do Hutus and Tutsis Believe Suffered due to the Conflict?

First, I assessed the perceived severity of harm inflicted upon the ingroup and upon the outgroup. Then, I investigated whether Hutus and Tutsis differ in the degree to which they endorsed competitive victimhood.

To assess the perceived severity of harm inflicted on each group (H4), mixed ANOVAs were conducted for each indicator of harm, with Target group (ingroup vs. outgroup) as the within-subject factor and participants' Ethnic group membership (Hutus vs. Tutsis) as the between-subject factor.

In line with predictions, across the two indicators of harm, the results revealed a main effect of Target group such that each group perceived the harm inflicted on

themselves as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup. However, there was also an unexpected interaction between Target group and Ethnic group membership such that, Hutus relative to Tutsis, perceived the harm inflicted on their ingroup as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup.

More specifically, for casualty estimates, the analysis yielded a main effect of Target group,  $F(1, 93) = 55.34, p < .001, \eta^2 = .37$ , such that respondents estimated a higher percentage of the casualties in the conflict to be ingroup members ( $M = 57.52\%$ ,  $SE = 2.10$ ) and a lower percentage to be outgroup members ( $M = 34.60\%$ ,  $SE = 1.87$ ). The analysis also revealed a marginally significant Target group X Ethnic group membership interaction,  $F(1, 93) = 3.80, p = .054, \eta^2 = .039$ . Pair-wise comparisons conducted to clarify the interaction effect indicated that both Hutus and Tutsis perceived their ingroup to have suffered more than the outgroup. However, Hutus perceived that more harm had been inflicted on their ingroup relative to the outgroup ( $M_D = 28.92, SE = 3.93$ ) compared to Tutsis ( $M_D = 16.91, SE = 4.8$ ). There was no difference between Hutus' and Tutsis' estimates of ingroup casualties and their estimates of outgroup casualties.

Likewise, for economic harm, ANOVA revealed a main effect of Target group,  $F(1, 110) = 46.37, p < .001, \eta^2 = .30$ , such that respondents perceived the economic harm inflicted on their ingroup ( $M = 4.18, SE = .08$ ) as more severe than the harm inflicted on the outgroup ( $M = 3.19, SE = .13$ ). The analysis also yielded a Target group X Ethnic group membership interaction,  $F(1, 110) = 9.81, p = .002, \eta^2 = .082$  (see Figure 12). All pair-wise comparisons conducted to clarify the interaction effect were significant. Hutus perceived more harm inflicted on their ingroup ( $M = 4.35, SE = .09$ ) than Tutsis ( $M =$

4.00,  $SE = .13$ ), whereas Tutsis relative to Hutus perceived the outgroup harm to be greater ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SE = .17$  and  $M = 2.91$ ,  $SE = .19$  for Tutsis and Hutus respectively). Similar to the findings with casualty estimates measure, the difference between the perceived harm inflicted on the ingroup relative to the outgroup was greater for Hutus ( $M_D = 1.44$ ,  $SE = .20$ ) than for Tutsis ( $M_D = .53$ ,  $SE = .21$ ). This asymmetry in perceived severity of harm is meaningful considering that Hutus have been the main target of the violence between 1960s-1993.

To assess the effect of ethnic group membership on competitive victimhood, an independent sample  $t$  test was conducted with ethnic group membership as the between subject factor and competitive victimhood as the dependent variable. The results revealed that, for both groups, the ratings of competitive victimhood were higher than the mid-point of the scale ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 1.43$  for Hutus, and  $M = 4.26$ ,  $SD = 1.57$  for Tutsis), showing that both groups perceived their ingroup as being harmed to a greater degree than the outgroup. However, there was no difference between Hutus' and Tutsis' degree of endorsement of competitive victimhood,  $t(110) = -.34$ ,  $p = .73$ .

#### 4.4.3 Do Hutus and Tutsis Frame the Conflict Differently?

To test Hypothesis 5, a mixed ANOVA was conducted with four levels of Conflict framing as the within-subject factor (state vs. citizens, state vs. extremist groups, conflict among extremists, conflict between Hutus and Tutsis) and ethnic group membership as the between subject factor. ANOVA revealed a main effect of Conflict framing,  $F(3, 303) = 41.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .29$ , such that respondents perceived the conflict primarily as ethnic clashes between Hutus and Tutsis ( $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ) and to an equal extent as a conflict among extremist groups ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 1.38$ ). These



were followed by a perceived conflict between the state and extremist groups ( $M = 2.37$ ,  $SD = 1.32$ ) and lastly as a conflict between the state and its citizens ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ) (see Figure 13). The interaction effect between Conflict framing and Ethnic group membership was not significant,  $F(3, 303) = .37$ ,  $p = .77$ .

To test Hypothesis 6, independent  $t$  tests were conducted to compare whether Hutus and Tutsis differed in their endorsements of each conflict frame. Contrary to the predictions, there were no differences between Hutus and Tutsis in their endorsement of any of the conflict frames: ethnic conflict,  $t(110) = 1.58$ ,  $p = .12$ , a conflict between state and extremists,  $t(102) = 1.15$ ,  $p = .25$ , or a conflict between extremist groups,  $t(106) = .23$ ,  $p = .82$ , or as a conflict between government and citizens,  $t(106) = 1.66$ ,  $p = .10$ .

#### 4.4.4 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Hutus' and Tutsis' Construals of the Conflict?

##### 4.4.4.1 Ethnic and National Identification

There was no difference between Hutus and Tutsis in the degree to which they identified with their ethnic group (Hutus:  $M = 4.63$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ; Tutsis:  $M = 4.32$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ) or the national group (Hutus:  $M = 5.57$ ,  $SD = .81$ ; Tutsis:  $M = 5.47$ ,  $SD = .94$ ). However, participants' national identification was stronger than their ethnic identification,  $t(113) = 7.60$ ,  $p < .001$ . The correlation between ethnic and national identification was not significant for either Hutus ( $r = .02$ ) or Tutsis ( $r = .19$ ). It should be noted that national identification for both groups was very high ( $M$ s = 5.57 and 5.47 in 6-point scales), suggesting a ceiling effect. As noted in the hypotheses section, national identification in this study was not a useful predictor of any of the dependent measures,



and did not affect the relationship between ethnic identification and dependent variables. Therefore, national identification measure was dropped from further analysis.

#### 4.4.4.2 Attributions of Responsibility

The same analytic procedure as in Study 2 was conducted to assess the role of ethnic identification on construals of past conflict. Regression analyses were conducted with ethnic group membership, ethnic identification, and their interaction as predictors. Each attribution of responsibility measure served as the dependent variable. The effect of ingroup identification was tested separately for the ingroup and outgroup measures. Similar to the previous studies, ethnic identification showed the same pattern of effects on attributions of responsibility for the instigation and for the consequences of the events. Therefore, attribution of responsibility scores were collapsed across the two types of responsibility for the ingroup people in general ( $\alpha = .61$ ), the outgroup people in general ( $\alpha = .72$ ), ingroup extremists ( $\alpha = .68$ ), and outgroup extremists ( $\alpha = .67$ ), and the analyses were re-conducted with the averaged scores.

Across attributions of responsibility measures, the interaction between ethnic group membership and ingroup identification was not significant (see Table 11). To examine the effect of ethnic identification separately for each group (H7a-b), regression analyses were conducted with ethnic identification as the predictor and each attribution of responsibility measure as the dependent measure. A summary of the regression analyses results for each ethnic group is presented in Table 12. Overall, the more participants identified with their ethnic ingroup the more responsibility they attributed to the outgroup. For both groups, the strength of ingroup identification was not associated with the amount of responsibility attributed specifically to extremist members of ingroups or

outgroups. Unexpectedly, the more Hutus identified with their ethnic group the more responsibility they attributed to the ingroup.

#### 4.4.4.3 Legitimization of Ingroup Violence

To investigate the effect of ethnic identification on legitimization of ingroup violence, a regression analysis was conducted with ethnic identification, ethnic group membership, and their interaction as predictors. The analysis yielded a significant effect of ethnic identification,  $\beta = .47$ ,  $t(109) = 3.91$ ,  $p < .001$ , and a marginally significant ethnic group membership X ethnic identification interaction,  $\beta = -.21$ ,  $t(109) = -1.72$ ,  $p = .08$ . Simple slope analyses conducted to clarify the interaction effect indicated that the more Hutus identified with their ethnic group, the more they legitimized ingroup violent acts,  $\beta = .46$ ,  $t(54) = 3.84$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, the degree to which Tutsis identified with their ethnic group was not associated with legitimization of ingroup violence,  $\beta = .16$ ,  $t(55) = 1.21$ ,  $p = .23$ .

The results indicated that the more Hutus identified with their ingroup, the more they legitimized the violence committed by the ingroup, but they also attributed more responsibility to ingroup people in general. To clarify this puzzling result, I assessed whether ingroup identification would be related to the same extent to ingroup responsibility after controlling for legitimization of violence. The results indicated that after controlling for legitimization of ingroup violence, the relationship between ingroup identification and ingroup responsibility became non-significant for Hutus ( $r = .19$ ), but did not change for Tutsis ( $r = .18$ ).

#### 4.4.4.4 Severity of Harm

To test Hypothesis 8, similar to prior analyses, regressions were conducted with ethnic group membership, ethnic identification and their interaction as predictors. Each indicator of harm served as a dependent measure in separate regression analyses. Across indicators of harm, the interaction between ethnic identification and ethnic group membership was not significant (see Table 13). Although this interaction was not significant, simple slope analyses were conducted to test whether ingroup identification might have an effect for either ethnic group. Regression analyses with ethnic identification as the predictor and each severity of harm indicator as the dependent measure were conducted separately for each ethnic group. Overall, the results indicated that ethnic identification was not associated with perceived severity of harm on the ingroup or the outgroup (see Table 14). The only significant prediction emerged for the economic harm indicator, such that for Tutsis, stronger ethnic identification was related to less economic harm perceived to be inflicted on the outgroup,  $\beta = -.39$ ,  $t(56) = -3.09$ ,  $p < .01$ .

Similar analyses were conducted with competitive victimhood measure as the dependent variable. As expected, the analyses yielded only an effect of ethnic identification,  $\beta = .34$ ,  $t(108) = 2.72$ ,  $p < .01$ , such that the more respondents identified with their ethnic group the more they perceived the ingroup to have suffered more than the outgroup. While the interaction between ethnic identification and group membership was not significant,  $\beta = -.09$ ,  $t(108) = -.73$ ,  $p = .47$ , simple regression analyses conducted separately with each group suggested that the strength of ethnic identification was

associated with the ratings of competitive victimhood only for Hutus,  $\beta = .38$ ,  $t(53) = 2.97$ ,  $p = .005$ ; but not for Tutsis,  $\beta = .18$ ,  $t(55) = 1.39$ ,  $p = .17$ .

#### 4.4.4.5 Conflict Framing

To test Hypothesis 9, similar regression analyses were conducted with each conflict frame as the dependent variable. The summary of the results is presented in Table 15. As predicted, the more group members identified with their ethnic groups, the more they endorsed an ethnic conflict framing. The interaction between ethnic group membership and ethnic identification on ethnic conflict framing was not significant. Simple slope analysis also showed that ethnic identification was a significant predictor of ethnic conflict framing for each group considered separately,  $\beta = .37$ ,  $t(54) = 2.94$ ,  $p = .005$  for Hutus, and  $\beta = .39$ ,  $t(54) = 3.14$ ,  $p = .003$  for Tutsis.

The analyses also yielded an ethnic group membership X ethnic identification effect on endorsement of a conflict between the state and its citizens. Simple slope analyses showed that only for Tutsis, as expected, stronger ethnic identification was associated with perceiving the conflict less as a conflict between the state and the citizens,  $\beta = -.36$ ,  $t(54) = -2.79$ ,  $p < .01$ ; however, for Hutus, ethnic identification was not associated with the endorsement of a conflict between the state and the citizens,  $\beta = .09$ ,  $t(52) = .63$ ,  $p = .53$ . Within the context of the Burundi conflict in which Tutsis have historically been the ruling elite, as predicted, Tutsis might psychologically associate the state with their ethnic group, in which case stronger ethnic identification would lead to perceiving less conflict between the state and the citizens.



## 4.5 Discussion

### 4.5.1 How Do Hutus and Tutsis Construe the Interethnic Conflict in Burundi?

In line with the findings from the previous two studies, each group assigned less responsibility to their ingroup for the conflict than to the outgroup. Furthermore, paralleling the findings in Study 1 and supporting my predictions, each group perceived themselves as less responsible for the instigation relative to the consequences of conflict, but perceived the outgroup as more responsible for the consequences relative to the instigation of conflict. Additionally, replicating the findings of Study 2, regardless of group membership, extremist groups were perceived as more responsible than ingroup and outgroup people in general.

Study 3 also extended the assessment of attributions of responsibility by examining an additional variable, the legitimization of ingroup violence. One interesting but contradictory finding was that for Hutus, the amount of responsibility assigned to ingroup people in general and the responsibility assigned to ingroup extremists were differentially related to legitimization of violence. The more Hutus viewed their ingroup extremists as responsible for the conflict, the less they justified ingroup violence; however, the more they viewed ingroup people in general responsible for the conflict, the more they justified ingroup violence. This finding suggests that responsibility might take on different meanings when it is associated with different subgroups within the larger ingroup. As such, ingroup responsibility does not always translate to acceptance of accountability for the conflict. Further research is necessary to examine the processes under which ingroup responsibility is associated with acceptance of moral accountability for the violent acts or with increased inclination to justify ingroup violence.



With regard to severity of harm, as predicted, each group perceived the harm inflicted on them as greater than the harm inflicted on the outgroup. Additionally, the mutual perceptions of ingroup and outgroup harm were asymmetric, such that Tutsis relative to Hutus perceived more harm inflicted on the outgroup. This pattern might reflect a reality constraint in the Burundi conflict in which Hutus were for many decades the main target of victimization. The realities of the conflict were also reflected in the composition of the current sample in which a higher percentage of Hutu respondents as compared to Tutsi respondents reported that either themselves or their families had experienced physical violence, abuse, or had been displaced during the course of the conflict. However, Hutus and Tutsis did not differ in their ratings of competitive victimhood. In other words, when explicitly asked to compare the amount of harm inflicted on each group, both groups, to an equal extent, perceived their ingroup to have suffered more than the outgroup. Whether group members engage in intergroup comparisons of harm which might increase the inclination to compete with the outgroup, or whether they reflect separately on the harm that each group has suffered, might have important implications on their responses.

With regard to conflict framing, there were no differences between Hutus and Tutsis in the degree to which they endorsed the different conflict frames. The hypotheses based on Lemarchand's (1994) analysis of each group's conflict frame were not supported. Since 1994 when Lemarchand's book was published, a civil war has been going on in Burundi, both sides engaged in massacres, and Tutsis lost some of their power to Hutu majority. This shift in power relations might have led to more symmetric perceptions of conflict. The current findings are in line with the results from focus group

discussions that I conducted with Hutus and Tutsis (208 participants) in Burundi (Bilali, 2007). Content analysis of participants' open-ended responses showed that perceptions of causes of the conflict belonged in three main categories: (1) the leaders (i.e., leaders' corruption, greed, power struggles), (2) ethnic divisions (e.g., ethnic hatred, a history of conflict), and (3) social conditions (e.g., poverty, difficult life conditions). Overall, similar to the results of the current study, there were no differences between Hutus and Tutsis in the perceived causes of the conflict.

#### 4.5.2 The Role of Ethnic Identification on Construals of the Past

One important goal of this study was to assess whether individual differences in the strength of ingroup identification play a role on group members' construals of the past under conditions of ongoing conflict and violence. The strength of ingroup identification was associated with more responsibility attributed to the outgroup as a whole, to higher ratings of competitive victimhood, increased legitimization of ingroup violence, and higher endorsement of an ethnic conflict frame. The strength of ingroup identification was not associated with the amount of responsibility attributed to extremist groups (both of in- and outgroup) and neither was it associated with perceived severity of harm.

The relationship of ingroup identification with outgroup rather than ingroup attributions, might reflect the nature of deep prejudices embedded in a long history of violence between Hutus and Tutsis. The contradicting finding that, for Hutus, stronger ingroup identification was related to more responsibility attributed to their ingroup was clarified when taking into account the role of the legitimization of ingroup violence. When controlling for legitimization of ingroup violence, the relationship between ingroup identification and ingroup responsibility became non-significant. However, why more

ingroup responsibility was associated with higher ingroup legitimization (rather than lower legitimization) needs more scrutinizing. Overall, Hutus placed very little responsibility to their ingroup. It is possible that for a victimized group such as the Hutus, the positive relation between ingroup identification and ingroup responsibility might be a manifestation of perceiving the ingroup as an active agent in the conflict.

Ingroup identification was not associated with perceived severity of harm inflicted on each group separately, but was related to higher ratings of competitive victimhood for Hutus only. The use of these different approaches raises important questions regarding the relation between ingroup identification and perceived severity of harm. Does the strength of ingroup identification drive *intergroup comparison* of severity of harm, thus leading to competition over suffering; or alternatively, does ingroup identification independently affect perceived harm inflicted on each group (i.e., lower outgroup harm and higher ingroup harm)? According to the latter view, the belief that the ingroup has suffered more than the outgroup should be a by-product of this process. Future research should investigate the use of these different approaches and examine potential implications that each might have for intergroup outcomes.

## CHAPTER 5

### GENERAL DISCUSSION

The three studies reported here investigated how group members construe past intergroup conflict in which the ingroup is involved, and how the strength of identification with the ingroup is associated with these construals. Based on prior intergroup conflict and social psychology literature, I identified and assessed three dimensions along which construals of conflict might vary. These included attributions of responsibility, severity of harm, and conflict framing. Attributions of responsibility and perceived severity of harm accounted for variations in construals of the violent events, whereas conflict framing assessed whether groups in conflict have similar understanding of the core issues involved.

Within social psychology, the study of “historical memories” of conflict has received only minimal attention (e.g., Liu et al., 1999; Sahdra & Ross, 2007). Despite an acknowledgment that blaming the adversary and perceived victimhood play a negative role in perpetuation of the cycles of conflict, no research that I am aware of, has actually assessed how group members assign responsibility or how they estimate the severity of harm inflicted on each group. While disciplines such as sociology, anthropology or political sciences enrich our understanding of the role that media, history textbooks, leadership, and other societal factors in shaping shared representations of the conflict, it is not clear what factors, at the individual level, drive group members to endorse some narratives while rejecting others. In the current research, I adopted a social identity perspective as a suitable framework for this investigation. This framework gives the



opportunity to examine phenomena at the interaction between the individual and the group, that is, how individuals act and think as group members. By using real world contexts of intergroup conflicts and violence I investigated how the degree to which group members are attached to their ingroups is associated with construals of the conflict. The findings showed that regardless of the status of the group (e.g., majority vs. minority; victim vs. perpetrator), the temporal distance to the conflict (past vs. ongoing conflict), the strength of societal narratives (strong governmental narratives or no public debates), individual level characteristics were an important predictor of construals of the conflict. Understanding how and why group members interpret conflicts in certain ways and retain memories of some events while forgetting others, should be important to find ways to address the underlying needs and motives that give rise to these differential construals.

Below, I discuss the main findings of the current research and highlight avenues to future research in this area.

## 5.1 Who Do People Hold Responsible for Intergroup Conflicts?

### 5.1.1 Targets of Attributions

Across the three studies participants exhibited ingroup favoritism in attributions of responsibility. Particularly, they assigned less responsibility to their ingroup, but more responsibility to the outgroup and to the external factors (such as third parties or external circumstances), regardless of whether the ingroup was a perpetrator (e.g., Turks in the Armenian genocide) or a victim (e.g., Kurds in the Turkish-Kurdish conflict, or Hutus in the Burundi conflict). While it is generally acknowledged that each group blames the outgroup for the conflict (Bar-Tal, 2007), only few studies have actually assessed the amount of responsibility that group members assign to each party in contexts of



intergroup conflict (for an example see Doosje, Zebel, Scheermeijer, & Mathyi, 2007). Two findings were notable. First, across studies, respondents of each group assigned *some* responsibility to the ingroup for the conflict suggesting that denial of ingroup responsibility is not contingent upon the overall amount of responsibility assigned to the ingroup, but upon the comparison of ingroup and outgroup responsibility. Second, group members assigned substantial responsibility to third parties and other external factors for the conflict (Studies 1 and 2). For instance, in the Turkish -Armenian conflict context, Turks attributed equal amount of responsibility to external factors (i.e., third parties and situational factors) as to the outgroup (the Armenians), and equal amount of responsibility for the consequences of conflict to the external factors as to the ingroup. Similarly, in the second study, both Turks and Kurds assigned more responsibility to third parties than to Turkish and Kurdish people. Prior literature (e.g., Bandura, 1999) suggests that attributions of responsibility to external factors tone down ingroup's responsibility for the conflict. This argument is plausible for majority or perpetrator groups which may need to justify ingroup's harmdoing actions or its privileged position, however, it is not clear why minority or victim groups such as Kurds in Turkey would assign as much responsibility to third parties. May (1987) argues that people or groups who did not commit violent acts might still be responsible (a) because they might have encouraged violence, (b) helped cultivate the conditions for it to occur, or (c) they did not prevent the negative occurrences (see also Lickel, Schmader, & Hamilton, 2003). These factors might also be important to understand why groups assign responsibility to third parties.

The role of third parties in ethnic conflict, especially in conflict intervention, has been widely investigated by political scientists (e.g., Balch-Lindsay & Enterline, 2000; Fisher, 2001, Regan, 2002). The current research suggests that third parties and situational factors play an important role in group members' beliefs about initiation and evolution of conflict. The study of intergroup conflict, especially within social psychology, focuses on the factors related either to the ingroup or the outgroup. Lay perceptions about the role of third parties and situational factors might influence the dynamics of conflict. These beliefs might either exacerbate conflict or provide a potential for resolution. Understanding the conditions that give rise to violence, such as the role of economics, ideologies, history (Staub, 1989), and even third parties, might lead group members to making less dispositional attributions to the outgroup. In other words, considering the role of factors that foster conditions for violence to occur, might lead to viewing the adversary as "less evil", which in turn might open avenues for reconciliation.

#### 5.1.2 Attributing Responsibility to Extremists vs. the General Population

The current research went beyond ingroup vs. outgroup distinctions to assessing different types of targets within in- and outgroup, such as institutions, extremist groups, or general population (Studies 2 and 3). Both studies showed that people distinguish the general population from the extremist groups or institutions. Overall, group members attributed less responsibility to their ingroup, however they also perceived the ingroup institutions or ingroup extremists to be more responsible than outgroup people. However, the mechanisms that lead group members to attribute responsibility to extremist groups vs. general population are not yet understood. Two research literatures are relevant but provide alternate predictions.

On one hand, research on the ‘black sheep’ effect (Abrams, Marques, Bown, & Dougill, 2002; Marques & Yzerbyt, 1988) suggests that group members are motivated to exclude undesirable ingroup members from the representation of the ingroup (Eidelman, Silvia, & Biernat, 2006), which in turn helps maintain and enhance a positive group identity. In addition, group members, especially high identifiers, are more motivated to include outgroup deviants in the representation of the outgroup in order to establish a positive distinction between the ingroup and the outgroup (Abrams, Marques, Randsley de Moura, Hutchison, & Bown, 2004; Hutchison, Abrams, Gutierrez, & Viki, 2008). According to this view, group members might be motivated to view the ingroup extremists as deviants, whereas they view the outgroup extremists as typical members of the outgroup.

On the other hand, the intergroup conflict literature suggests that intense conflict and threat enhances group unity and solidarity (Pettigrew, 2003). For example, some research (e.g., Rothgerber, 1997) shows that a threat to the ingroup enhances perceptions of similarity and common fate within the group. As such, under conditions of intense conflict, groups who would be perceived as “extremists” by the outgroup might be perceived as the “heroes” and advocates among members of the ingroup. Under what conditions are ingroup extremists perceived as “heroes” and when are they perceived as deviants? Further research is necessary to investigate the mechanisms that lead to such different outcomes.

### 5.1.3 Responsibility for Instigation vs. Consequences of Conflict

I distinguished two types of responsibility, responsibility for the instigation versus the consequences of the events. Studies 1 and 3 supported the hypotheses that groups

engage in a competition over ‘who started the conflict’. This competition in turn drives group members to attribute less responsibility to the ingroup for the instigation than for the consequences of the conflict, and might lead the outgroup to be perceived as more responsible for the instigation than for the consequences of the conflict. These patterns of attributions reveal how justification of ingroup’s harmdoing or denial of responsibility is embedded in the construals and representations of the conflict. These representations might be either post-hoc explanations of events or justifications to carry an attack on premises that the outgroup is dangerous.

The current findings suggest that each group might focus on different types of attributions when addressing each party’s responsibility in the conflict. For example, to deflect their responsibility, perpetrator groups might be more motivated to focus on the responsibility for the instigation of the acts; whereas victims, being preoccupied with the harm and suffering inflicted upon them, might focus on the responsibility for the consequences of the conflict. If each group emphasizes different aspects of events, any discussion on responsibility of the conflict would be unproductive.

Overall, people’s lay judgments on attributions of responsibility should be investigated more systematically in order to reach a better understanding of the motivational factors that lead to differential attributions of responsibility. In addition, the current research demonstrated that acknowledgement of responsibility might be different from accepting liability or blameworthiness for the harmdoing. As such, more research is needed to differentiate these phenomena at an intergroup level.



## 5.2 Who Do People Believe Suffered during Conflict?

With regard to severity of harm, I suggested that ingroup favoritism would translate to more harm perceived to be inflicted on the ingroup than on the outgroup. Why would groups attempt to portray themselves as victims? In the last two decades, as human rights have become more important in international relations, victims have gained legitimacy and entitlement due to past injustices (Moscovici & Perez, 2006). The status of the victim has become desirable as it attracts international aid, legitimacy, the right to reparations, and other policies that attempt to help victim groups to deal with the past suffering inflicted upon them.

Comparisons of the amount of harm inflicted on the ingroup and the outgroup yielded different results across the three studies presented here. For example, Turkish respondents reported that Armenians have suffered more than Turks during the Turkish-Armenian conflict at the beginning of 20th century; Turkish respondents perceived equal amount of harm to be inflicted on Turks and Kurds during the Turkish-Kurdish conflict, whereas Kurds perceived their ingroup to have suffered more; similarly, Hutus and Tutsis perceived the respective ingroups to have suffered more during the conflict. Overall, the ingroup favoritism hypothesis was supported only partially. These results however should not be interpreted in isolation, but should take into account the social realities of each context under study. Social reality characteristics might constrain the degree to which group members exhibit ingroup favoritism (Ellemers, Van Rijswijk, Roefs, & Simons, 1997). For example, within stereotype literature, considerable research (Brewer & Campbell, 1976; Eagly & Kite, 1987; Linssen & Hagendoorn, 1994) has found the content of stereotypes to be influenced by social reality features. Ellemers, Spears, &



Doosje (2002) claim that different response patterns should be understood by taking into considerations different goals and motives in combination with different contextual factors. Similarly, in the context of current studies, social reality features might constrain the degree to which ingroup favoritism is manifested. For example, taking into account that Turkey engaged in large scale massacres toward Armenians, it might not be feasible for Turks to completely deny the harm inflicted on Armenians; the harm can only be minimized to a certain degree for the claims to be believable. Additionally, it should be noted that the amount of harm reported was in line with the Turkish group narrative. Similarly, in Study 2, Turkish respondents perceived the harm inflicted on Turks and on Kurds to be equal. These perceptions fit the broader ingroup's framing of the conflict as a terrorism issue, which in turn denies the oppression of minority rights. Overall, group members' judgments of perceived severity of harm should be evaluated by taking into account the broader context of the conflict. Although groups might be inclined to portray themselves as the victims in the conflict, the extent to which this goal can be achieved is constrained by social context.

### 5.3 The Role of Conflict Frames in Intergroup Conflict

Each group is likely to endorse an ingroup favoring frame of the conflict. Conflict framing might be essential as it provides the lenses through which the conflictual events are interpreted. As such, conflict framing might function as a master schema which affects processing of relevant information. Conflict framing might have important implications especially in asymmetric conflicts. Each group in a conflict might endorse a different framing, thus inhibiting opportunities for a common understanding of the issues involved. For example, different conflict frames might lead to different interpretations of

the conflictual events (e.g., attributions of responsibility) and to endorsement of different conflict resolution strategies (e.g., fighting terrorists vs. granting minority rights).

Therefore, the antecedents and consequences of endorsing different conflict frames should be further explored.

#### 5.4 How Does Ingroup Identification Influence Construals of Past Conflict?

Across the three studies, the strength of ingroup identification was associated with ingroup favoritism in attributions of responsibility to the ingroup, the outgroup, as well as to third parties. The current findings indicated that the strength of ingroup identification was associated with both ingroup and outgroup attributions. One exception was Study 3 in which the strength of Hutus' and Tutsis' ethnic identification was associated more consistently with outgroup responsibility. Research on ingroup bias suggests that different processes might determine ingroup preference vs. outgroup evaluation (Brewer, 1999). Under conditions of extreme threat and violence, the strength of ingroup identification might differentially relate to ingroup and outgroup aspects of ingroup bias. For instance, the correlation between ingroup identification and outgroup prejudice has been shown to be high in the presence of intergroup conflict (Brewer, 1999). Heightened threat might weaken the relationship between the strength of ingroup identification and ingroup aspects (e.g., ingroup preference) of ingroup bias, while strengthening its relation with outgroup aspects (e.g., outgroup derogation) of ingroup bias.

The relationship between ethnic identification and perceived severity of harm was less straightforward. The strength of ethnic identification was associated with Turks' perceived harm in Studies 1 and 2, but it was not associated with Kurds', or with Hutus' and Tutsis' perceived harm. Ingroup favoritism hypothesis postulated that as group

members are motivated to think positively about themselves and their groups, they would be more inclined to minimize the harm inflicted on the outgroup, while perceiving the ingroup as the victim. These predictions are most appropriate when the ingroup is considered to be the perpetrator. It is less clear why the strength of ingroup identification among members of victimized groups would show different patterns in perceived amount of harm. It is possible that for victim groups the extent of harm suffered by the ingroup is salient regardless of the strength of ingroup identification. Sahdra and Ross (2007) also noted that the link between the strength of ingroup identification and memory of victimization events is less evident. New theoretical perspectives might be necessary to better understand biases that members of minority or victimized groups might manifest in perceived harm inflicted upon them and the outgroup. It is possible that members of perpetrator and victim groups might have different underlying motives and needs which produce differential interpretations of construals of conflict. For example, while I investigated the strength of ingroup identification, I did not assess the different ways in which individuals might relate to the ingroup or the content of their identity (i.e., the subjective meaning of group identity). Identification with different types of groups (e.g., victim vs. perpetrator) might give rise to different needs and concerns beyond maintaining a positive view of the ingroup. Identifying and understanding the underlying mechanisms, needs, and motives, that might have an influence in differential construals of conflict would provide important insights into understanding how cycles of violence are perpetuated.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Burundi, Turkey and other societies that have experienced violent conflicts face important decisions regarding how to deal with their violent history. For example, an article in the peace agreement signed in Burundi by all parties (Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi in 2000), called for clarification of “the entire history of Burundi, going as far back as possible in order to inform Burundi about their past. The purpose of this clarification shall be to rewrite Burundi’s history, so that all Burundians can interpret it in the same way” (Protocol 1, Article 8, c).

How can a shared interpretation be achieved when groups in a conflict exhibit clear differences in construals of the conflict? Furthermore, how can truth and justice be achieved and accountability for the past be established when groups endorse such different interpretations of the past? Within the reconciliation and conflict resolution literature, there is an acknowledgement that without addressing the past, acknowledging the harm done, and constructing a shared memory, it will not be possible to achieve peaceful relations between groups. For example, reconciliation efforts around the world have adopted programs such as truth and reconciliation commissions (TRCs) that aim to address and deal with the past as a way to reconstruct the future (Lederach, 1997). However, researchers have questioned the efficacy of these measures (e.g., Gibson, 2004), and noted the lack of empirical evidence in this domain (e.g., Barsalow, 2008; Mendeloff, 2004). In order to deal with these issues in an effective way it is important to understand how groups and their members construe their conflicts and how they come to

different understandings of the past. Understanding the factors that lead to different construals and interpretations might be important to inform effective strategies to change them. The current research attempted to contribute to this understanding.



## CHAPTER 7

### TABLES

Table 1. Regression Analyses with Ingroup (Turkish) Identification as a Predictor of Attributions of Responsibility on Each Target Group (Study 1).

<i>Attributions of responsibility</i>	Ingroup Identification				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>df</i>
Instigation					
Ingroup (Turks)	-.65	.10	-.53***	.29	108
Outgroup (Armenians)	.58	.09	.52***	.27	109
External factors	.46	.10	.42***	.17	108
Consequences					
Ingroup (Turks)	-.60	.10	-.48***	.23	108
Outgroup (Armenians)	.49	.12	.36***	.13	109
External factors	.41	.12	.31***	.10	108

\* <.05, \*\* <.01, \*\*\* <.001

Table 2. Regression Analyses with Ingroup (Turkish) Identification as a Predictor of Each Severity of Harm Indicator (Study 1).

	Ingroup Identification				
<i>Severity of harm</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	df
Ingroup harm					
Overall harm	.23	.10	.24*	.06	91
Displaced (1915)	.28	.10	.33**	.11	72
Casualties (1915)	.24	.10	.26*	.07	74
Outgroup harm					
Overall harm	-.25	.10	-.26*	.07	92
Displaced (1915)	-.41	.16	-.29**	.09	73
Casualties (1915)	-.38	.12	-.36***	.13	75

\* <.05, \*\* <.01, \*\*\* <.001

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Responsibility for the Instigation and Consequences of Conflict Attributed to Each Target Group (Study 2).

<i>Target of responsibility</i>	Attributions of Responsibility			
	Instigation		Consequences	
	M	SD	M	SD
<i>Participants of Turkish origin</i>				
The State	2.90	1.86	3.00	1.82
The PKK	5.29	1.39	5.43	1.19
Turks	2.21	1.61	2.14	1.49
Kurds	2.95	1.82	2.86	1.74
Third parties	4.46	1.50	4.29	1.58
<i>Participants of Kurdish origin</i>				
The state	5.03	1.50	4.96	1.57
The PKK	2.85	2.16	3.31	1.97
Turks	2.59	1.68	2.46	1.70
Kurds	1.19	1.41	1.38	1.52
Third parties	3.43	2.12	3.42	2.11

Table 4. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction on Each Target of Attribution Measure, after Collapsing Across Type of Attribution (Instigation vs. Consequences) (Study 2).

Target of attribution	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
The state					
Ethnic group	2.06	.02	.49***	10.55	.46
Ethnic identification	-.70	.07	-.55***	-10.47	
Ethnic group X identification	.94	.13	.37***	7.02	
The PKK					
Ethnic group	-2.18	.19	-.56***	-11.69	.42
Ethnic identification	.34	.06	.29***	5.38	
Ethnic group X identification	-.71	.13	-.31***	-5.56	
Turks					
Ethnic group	.27	.21	.08	1.29	.05
Ethnic identification	-.16	.07	-.16*	-2.30	
Ethnic group X identification	.46	.14	.23***	3.25	
Kurds					
Ethnic group	-1.66	.21	-.43***	-7.73	.22
Ethnic identification	.28	.07	.24***	3.86	
Ethnic group X identification	-.33	.15	-.14*	-2.22	

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Target of attribution	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
Third parties					
Ethnic group	-1.12	.24	-.28***	-4.69	.11
Ethnic identification	.28	.08	.23***	3.47	
Ethnic group X identification	-.27	.16	-.11	-1.64	

\* <.05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001



Table 5. Simple Slope Analyses (Regression) of Ethnic and National Identification as Predictors of Attributions of Responsibility on Each Target Group for Turkish and Kurdish Participants Separately (Study 2).

<i>Targets of attribution</i>	Ethnic Identification				National Identification			
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
<i>Turkish participants</i>								
The state	-.70	.07	-.60***	-10.48	-.84	.06	-.69***	-13.02
PKK	.34	.05	.44***	6.70	.40	.05	.48***	7.50
Turks	-.16	.07	-.17*	-2.34	-.24	.07	-.24***	-3.34
Kurds	.28	.08	.26***	3.68	.29	.08	.25***	3.51
Third parties	.28	.07	.27***	3.92	.30	.08	.27***	3.87
<i>Kurdish participants</i>								
The state	.25	.12	.24*	2.12	-.59	.10	-.55***	-5.74

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<i>Targets of attribution</i>	Ethnic Identification				National Identification			
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
PKK	-.37	.15	-.27*	-2.43	.61	.15	.43***	4.12
Turks	.30	.13	.26*	2.33	-.01	.14	-.01	-.06
Kurds	-.05	.11	-.05	-.42	.52	.10	.52***	5.28
Third parties	.01	.18	.01	.07	.35	.18	.21*	1.97

\* <.05, \*\* <.01, \*\*\* <.001

Table 6. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction as Predictors of each Severity of Harm Indicator (Study 2).

<i>Type of harm</i>	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
<i>Ingroup harm</i>				
Economic harm				
Ethnic group	.97	.16	.35***	6.09
Ethnic identification	.19	.05	.23***	3.52
Ethnic group X identification	-.14	.11	-.08	-1.27
Casualty estimates (percentages)				
Ethnic group	18.46	2.64	.39***	6.99
Ethnic identification	4.62	.89	.33***	5.18
Ethnic group X identification	-3.46	1.83	-.12+	-1.87
<i>Outgroup harm</i>				
Economic harm				
Ethnic group	-1.09	.22	-.29***	-4.98
Ethnic identification	-.26	.07	-.23***	-3.49
Ethnic group X identification	-.02	.15	-.01	-.11
Casualty estimates (percentages)				
Ethnic group	-16.19	2.55	-.36***	-6.35
Ethnic identification	-4.96	.86	-.37***	-5.76
Ethnic group X identification	3.85	1.77	.14*	2.18

Table 7. Regression Analyses with National Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction as Predictors of Responsibility Attributed to each Target Group, Collapsing across Attribution Type (Instigation vs. Consequences) (Study 2).

Target of attribution	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
The state				
Ethnic group	.38	.13	.20*	2.88
National identification	-.68	.08	-.60***	-9.12
Ethnic group X identification	.09	.08	.07	1.18
The PKK				
Ethnic group	-.66	.14	-.34***	-4.88
Ethnic identification	.53	.08	.46***	6.88
Ethnic group X identification	.02	.08	.02	.31
Turks				
Ethnic group	-.01	.16	-.01	-.06
National identification	-.17	.09	-.18*	-1.94
Ethnic group X identification	.07	.09	.07	.83
Kurds				
Ethnic group	-.46	.14	-.27***	-3.27
National identification	.37	.08	.36***	4.53
Ethnic group X identification	.08	.08	.07	1.01
Third parties				

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Target of attribution	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
Ethnic group	-.19	.18	-.09	-1.04
National identification	.38	.10	.33***	3.67
Ethnic group X identification	-.05	.10	-.04	-.47

\* <.05, \*\* <.01, \*\*\* <.001



Table 8. Regression Analyses with National Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction as Predictors of each Severity of Harm Indicator (Study 2).

<i>Type of harm</i>	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
<i>Ingroup harm</i>				
Economic harm				
Ethnic group	.44	.10	.39***	4.39
National identification	.07	.06	.11	1.23
Ethnic group X identification	-.20	.06	-.25***	-3.52
Casualty estimates (percentages)				
Ethnic group	7.97	1.76	.39***	4.54
National identification	.57	.99	.05	.58
Ethnic group X identification	-4.80	.99	-.34***	-4.83
<i>Outgroup harm</i>				
Economic harm				
Ethnic group	-.45	.16	-.25**	-2.76
National identification	.04	.09	.03	.39
Ethnic group X identification	.42	.09	.32***	4.48
Casualty estimates (percentages)				
Ethnic group	-7.39	1.68	-.37***	-4.40
National identification	-1.01	.95	-.09	-1.07
Ethnic group X identification	5.26	.95	.38***	5.53

Table 9. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction as Predictors of Endorsement of each Conflict Frame (Study 2).

<i>Conflict framing</i>	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
PKK vs. State				
Ethnic group	-.55	.14	-.24***	-4.03
Ethnic identification	.12	.05	.18*	2.60
Ethnic group X identification	.07	.10	.05	.70
PKK vs. citizens (Terrorism frame)				
Ethnic group	-.98	.17	-.35***	-5.97
Ethnic identification	.19	.06	.23***	3.41
Ethnic group X identification	-.19	.11	-.11	-1.68
State vs. citizens (Minority issue)				
Ethnic group	1.19	.18	.38***	6.72
Ethnic identification	-.19	.06	-.20**	-3.17
Ethnic group X identification	.45	.12	.24***	3.70
Turks vs. Kurds (Ethnic conflict)				
Ethnic group	-.21	.18	-.07	-1.16
Ethnic identification	.17	.06	.20**	2.82
Ethnic group X identification	.13	.12	.07	1.02

Table 10. Simple Slope Analyses of Ethnic and National Identification as Predictors of Endorsement of each Conflict Frame (Study 2).

Framing of conflict	Ethnic Identification				National Identification			
	B	B SE	$\beta$	t	B	B SE	$\beta$	t
<i>Turkish participants</i>								
PKK vs. State	.12	.04	.20**	2.88	.17	.04	.28***	3.99
PKK vs. citizens	.19	.06	.23***	3.29	.30	.06	.34***	5.04
State vs. citizens	-.19	.06	-.23***	3.24	-.23	.06	-.26***	-3.71
Turks vs. Kurds	.17	.06	.20**	2.76	.13	.07	.14*	2.01
<i>Kurdish participants</i>								
PKK vs. State	.18	.10	.21+	1.87	-.03	.10	-.04	-.31
PKK vs. citizens	.001	.09	.00	.00	.39	.08	.49***	4.87
State vs. citizens	.26	.11	.26*	2.34	-.45	.11	-.44***	-4.25
Turks vs. Kurds	.29	.10	.32**	2.87	-.17	.11	-.18	-1.60

Table 11. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification, Ethnic Group Membership and their Interaction as Predictors of Attributions of Responsibility (Study 3).

Target of responsibility	Ingroup identification				
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
<i>Ingroup targets</i>					
Ingroup people in general					
Ethnic group	-.16	.24	-.06	-.68	.065
Ethnic identification	.38	.16	.29*	2.34	
Ethnic group X Identification	-.18	.24	-.09	-.77	
Ingroup extremists					
Ethnic group	-.63	.24	-.25**	-2.70	.08
Ethnic identification	-.19	.16	-.15	-1.22	
Ethnic group X identification	.39	.24	.20	1.63	
<i>Outgroup targets</i>					
Outgroup people in general					
Ethnic group	.38	.29	.12	1.30	.13
Ethnic identification	.51	.20	.32**	2.61	
Ethnic group X Identification	.10	.29	.04	.34	
Outgroup extremists					
Ethnic group	.19	.18	.10	1.03	.03

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Target of responsibility	Ingroup identification				
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
Ethnic identification	.09	.13	.09	.68	
Ethnic group X identification	.12	.19	.08	.63	

\* <.05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001



Table 12. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification as a Predictor of Attributions of Responsibility Separately for Hutus and Tutsis (Study 3).

Target of Responsibility	Ethnic identification				R <sup>2</sup>
	B	SE B	β	t	
<i>Hutu participants</i>					
<i>Ingroup</i>					
The general population	.37	.16	.31*	2.38	.10
Extremist groups	-.19	.14	-.19	-1.37	.03
<i>Outgroup</i>					
The general population	.51	.19	.34**	2.65	.12
Extremist groups	.08	.13	.09	.65	0
<i>Tutsi participants</i>					
<i>Ingroup</i>					
The general population	.19	.18	.14	1.06	.02
Extremist groups	.19	.19	.13	1.00	.02
<i>Outgroup</i>					
The general population	.62	.22	.35**	2.79	.12
Extremist groups	.21	.13	.20	1.55	.04

\* <.05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Table 13. Regression Analyses with Ethnic identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction as Predictors of Perceived Severity of Harm (Study 3).

Target of responsibility	Ethnic identification				
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
<i>Ingroup harm</i>					
Economic harm					
Ethnic group	-.35	.16	-.21*	-2.17	.04
Ethnic identification	.02	.11	.03	.20	
Ethnic group X Identification	.002	.16	.001	.01	
Casualty estimates (percentage)					
Ethnic group	-5.70	4.2	-.14	-1.35	.003
Ethnic identification	-1.16	2.78	-.06	-.42	
Ethnic group X identification	5.09	4.4	.15	1.16	
<i>Outgroup harm</i>					
Economic harm					
Ethnic group	.49	.25	.18*	1.97	.12
Ethnic identification	-.53	.17	-.38**	-3.06	
Ethnic group X Identification	.43	.25	.21	1.68	
Casualty estimates (percentage)					
Ethnic group	6.05	3.78	.17	1.60	.05

continues on the next page

Target of responsibility	Ethnic identification				
	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
Ethnic identification	-1.62	2.48	-.09	-.65	
Ethnic group X identification	-1.35	3.93	-.05	-.34	

\* <.05, \*\* <.01, \*\*\* <.001

Table 14. Regression Analyses with Ethnic Identification as a Predictor of each Indicator of Perceived Harm Conducted Separately for Hutu and Tutsi Participants (Study 3).

Target of harm	Ethnic Identification				
	B	SE	$\beta$	t	R <sup>2</sup>
<i>Hutu participants</i>					
<i>Ingroup harm</i>					
Economic harm	.02	.09	.04	.25	.001
Casualty estimates (percentage)	-1.16	2.60	-.06	-.45	.004
<i>Outgroup harm</i>					
Economic harm	.02	.14	.02	.17	.001
Casualty estimates (percentage)	3.93	3.65	.16	1.08	.03
<i>Tutsi participants</i>					
<i>Ingroup harm</i>					
Economic harm	-.53	.17	-.39**	-3.09	.15
Casualty estimates (percentage)	-1.62	2.13	-.11	-.76	.01
<i>Outgroup harm</i>					
Economic harm	-.10	.19	-.07	-.52	.06
Casualty estimates (percentage)	-2.96	3.46	-.13	-.86	.02

\* <.05, \*\* < .01, \*\*\* < .001

Table 15. The Effect of Ethnic Identification, Ethnic Group Membership, and their Interaction on Conflict Framing (Study 3).

<i>Type of harm</i>	B	SE B	$\beta$	t
<i>A conflict among extremist groups</i>				
Ethnic group	-.05	.27	-.02	-.17
Ethnic identification	.06	.14	.06	.42
Ethnic group X identification	-.01	.27	-.006	-.05
<i>A conflict between government and citizens</i>				
Ethnic group	-.38	.21	-.17+	-1.82
Ethnic identification	.08	.11	.09	.68
Ethnic group X identification	-.48	.21	-.29*	-2.32
<i>A conflict between government and extremist groups</i>				
Ethnic group	-.35	.26	-.13	-1.34
Ethnic identification	-.07	.14	-.07	-.50
Ethnic group X identification	-.23	.26	-.12	-.90
<i>A conflict between Hutus and Tutsis (ethnic conflict)</i>				
Ethnic group	-.31	.26	-.11	-1.19
Ethnic identification	.38	.14	.33**	2.79
Ethnic group X identification	.15	.26	-.11	-1.20



## CHAPTER 8

### FIGURES

Figure 1. Attribution of Responsibility as a Function of Target Group (Ingroup vs. Outgroup vs. External Factors) and Type of Responsibility (Instigation vs. Consequences) (Study 1).

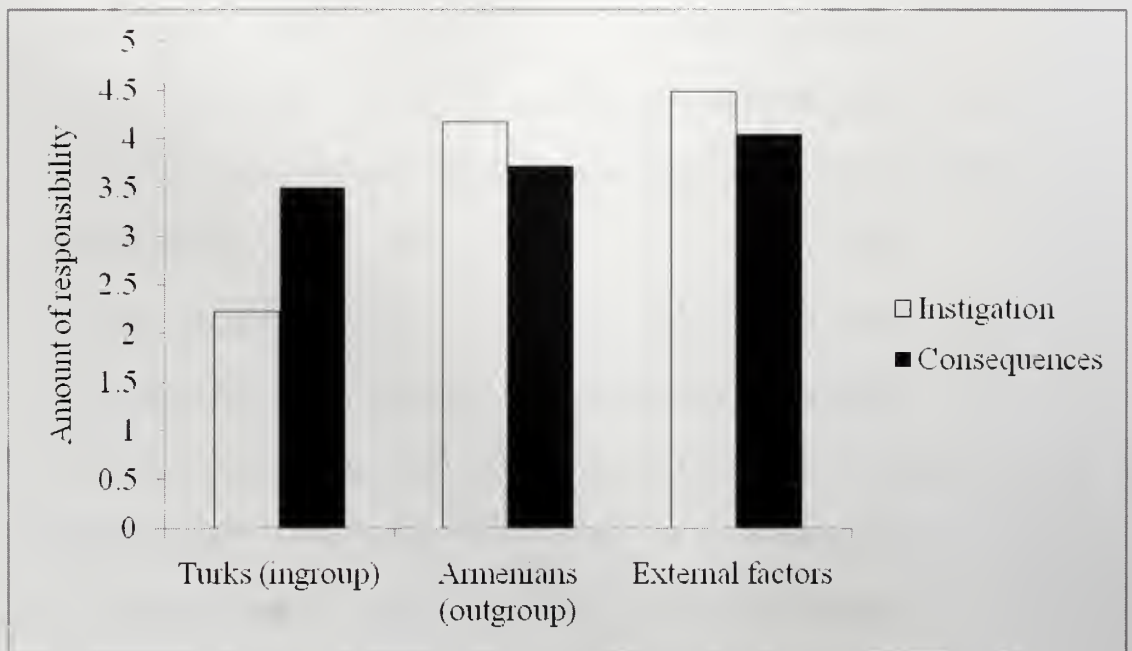


Figure 2. The Relationship between Ingroup Identification and Amount of Responsibility Attributed to each Target Group for the Inter group Conflict (Study 1).

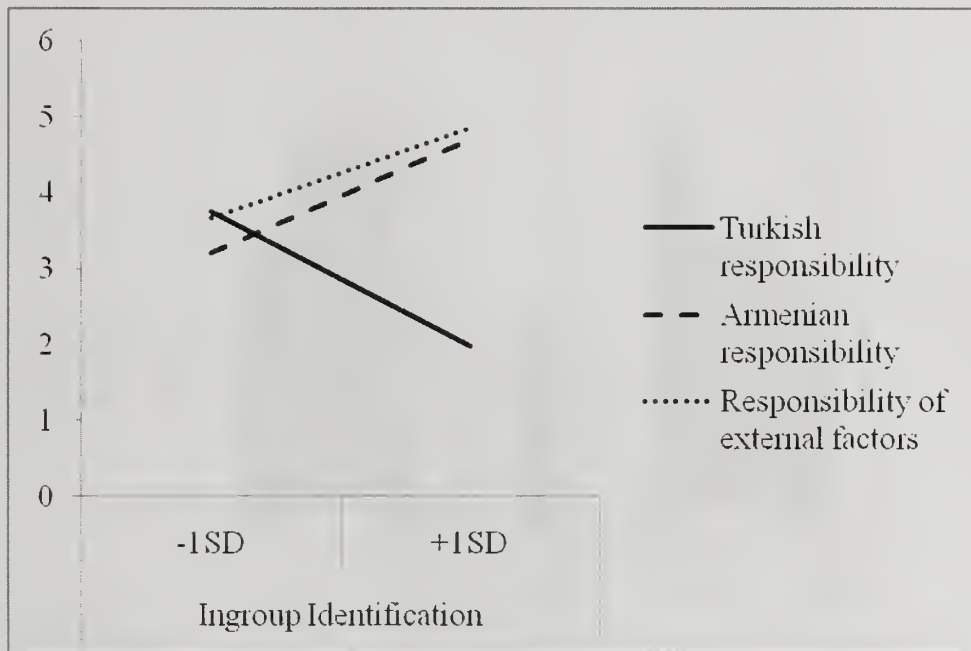


Figure 3. Attributions of Responsibility as a Function of Target Group (PKK vs. State vs. Turks vs. Kurds vs. Third parties) and Ethnic Group Membership (Study 2).

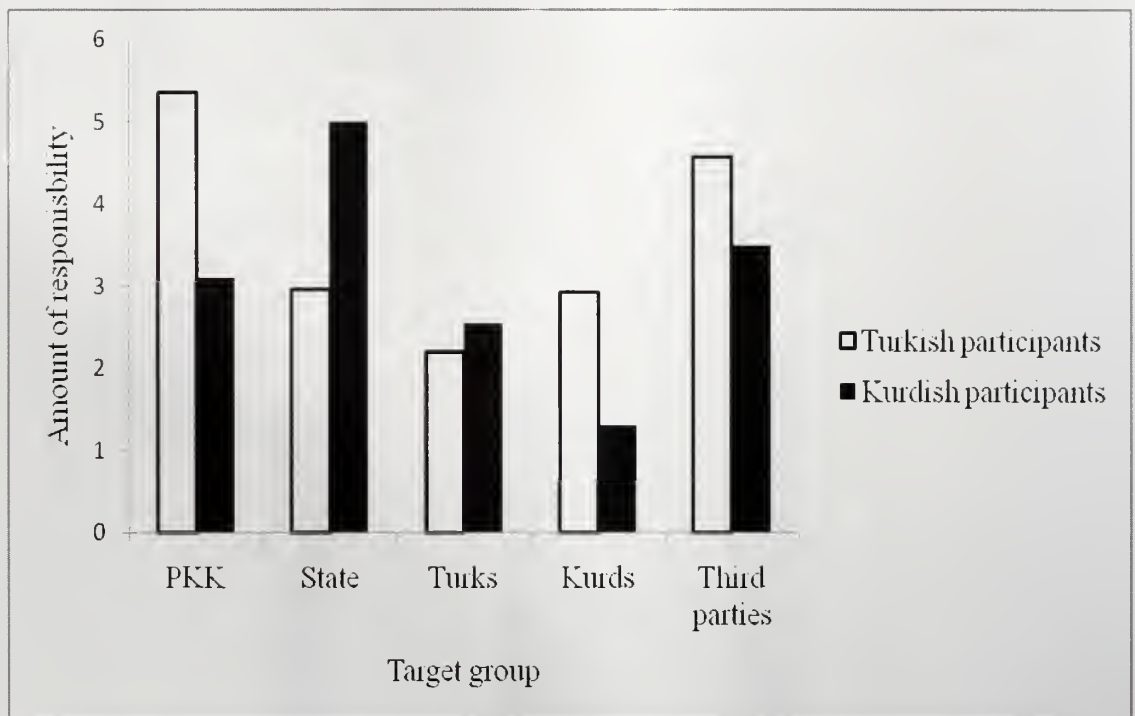


Figure 4. The Perceived Economic Harm as a Function of Target Group (Ingroup vs. Outgroup) and Ethnic Group Membership (Turkish vs. Kurdish) (Study 2).

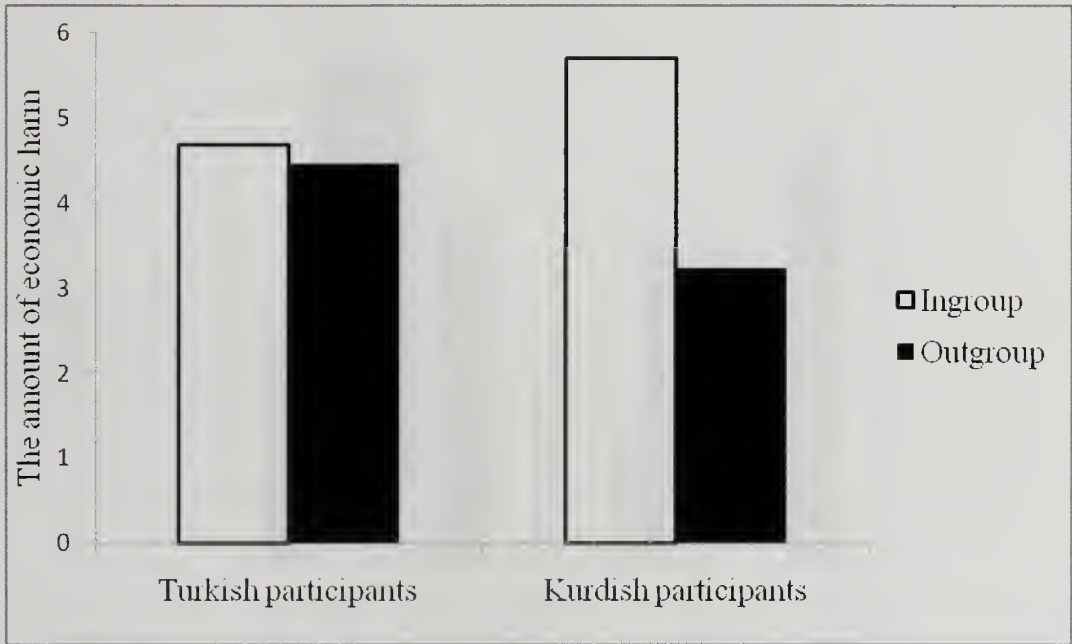


Figure 5. The Endorsement of Each Conflict Frame by Turks and Kurds (Study 2).

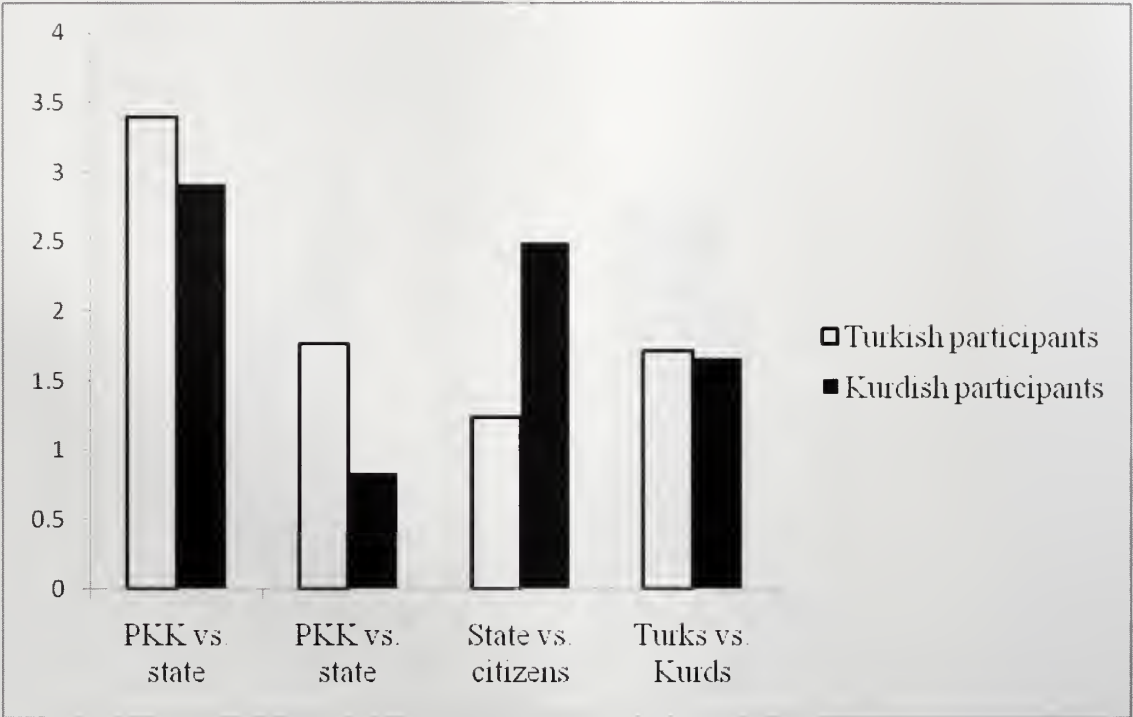




Figure 6. The Strength of Turks' and Kurds' Ethnic and National Identification (Study 2).

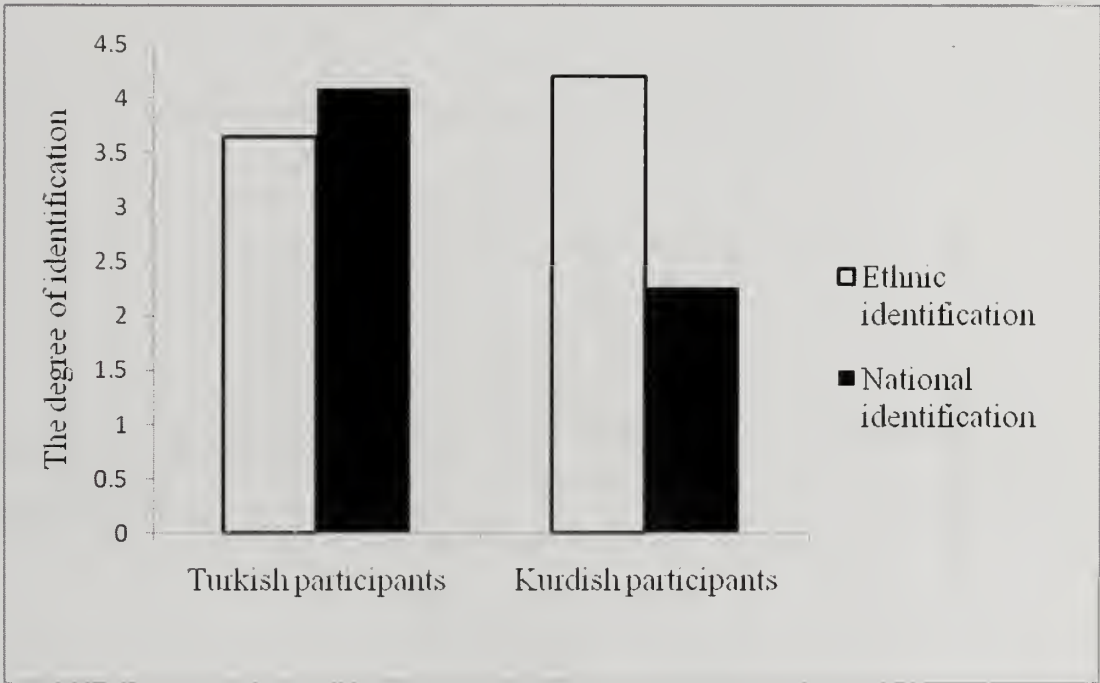


Figure 7. The Relationship between Ethnic Identification and Perceived Severity of Ingroup Harm (estimates of the percentage of ingroup casualties) for Turkish and Kurdish Participants (Study 2).

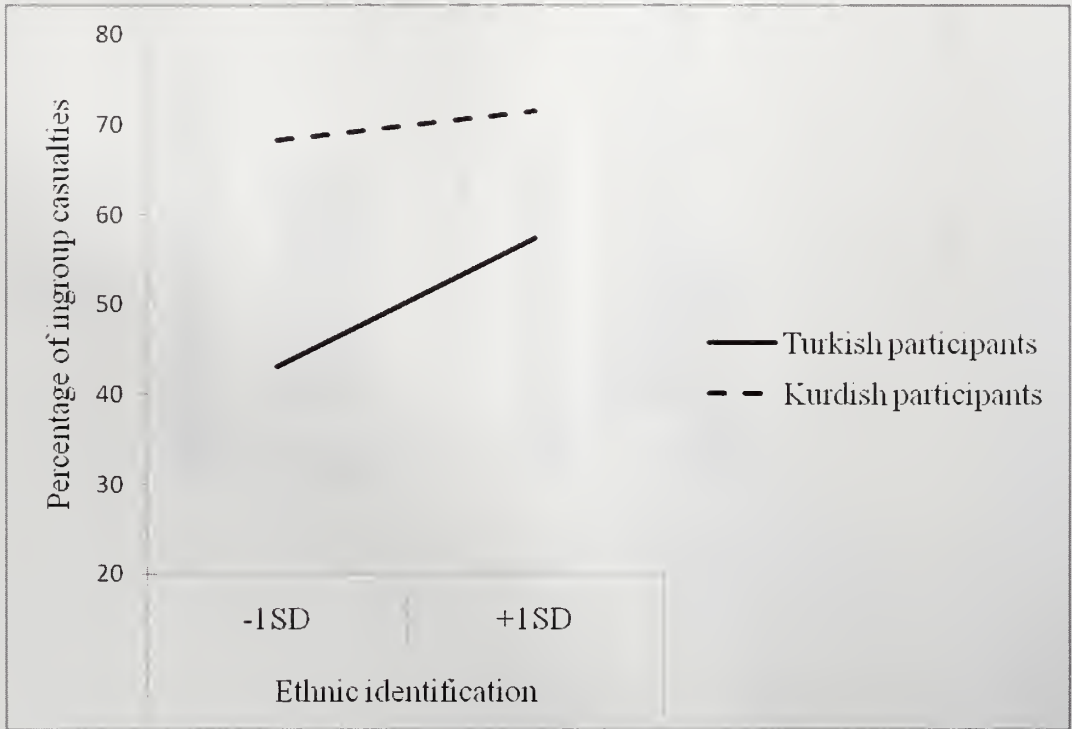


Figure 8. National Identification Predicts Turks' and Kurds' Estimates of Ingroup and Outgroup Victims (Percentage of Casualties) (Study 2).

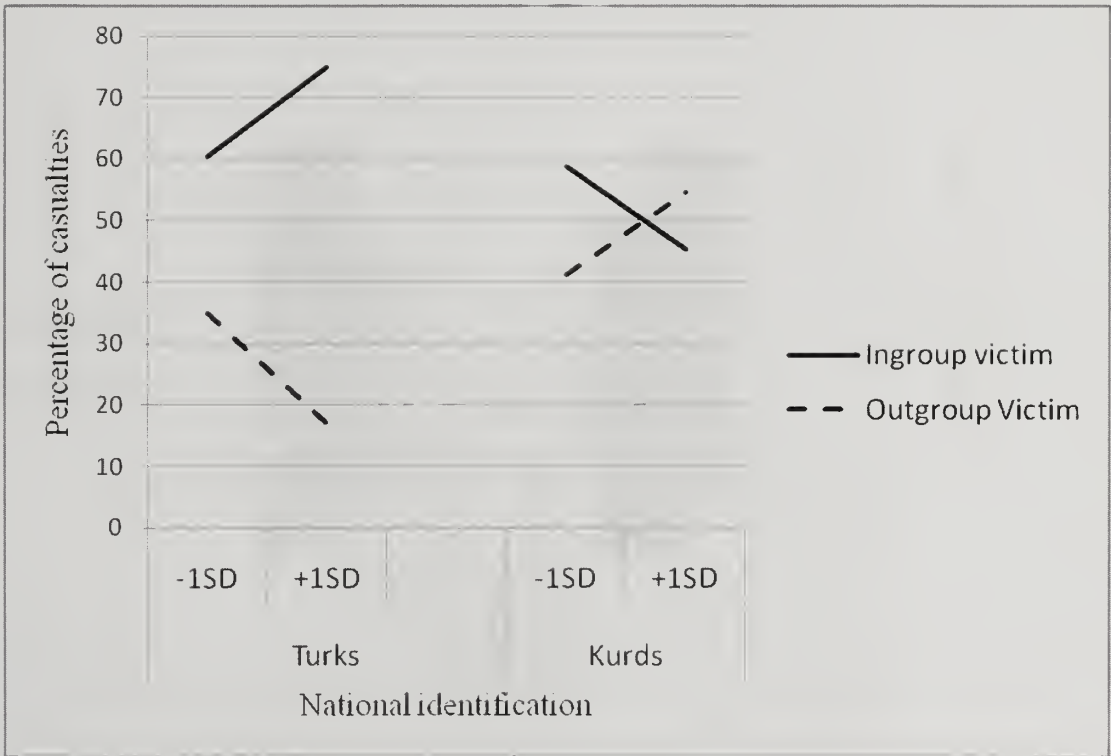


Figure 9. Attributions of Responsibility as a Function of Target Group (Ingroup vs. Outgroup) and Type of Responsibility (Instigation vs. Consequences) (Study 3).

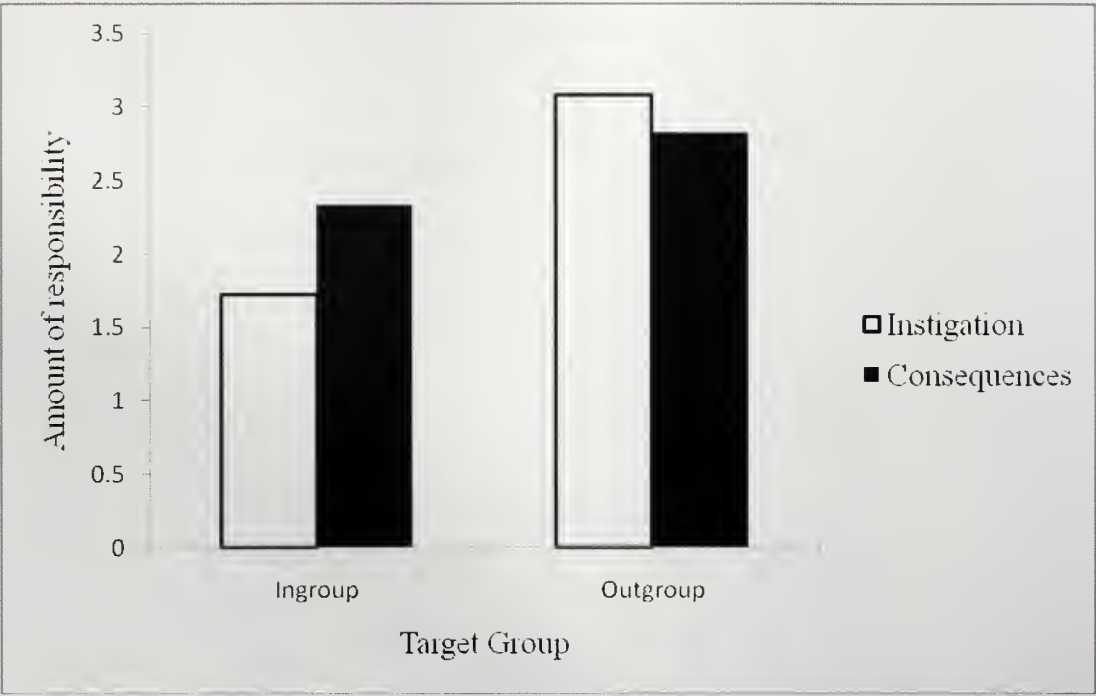


Figure 10. Attributions of Responsibility as a Function of Target Group (Ingroup vs. Outgroup) and Type of Target (Extremists vs. People in general) (Study 3).

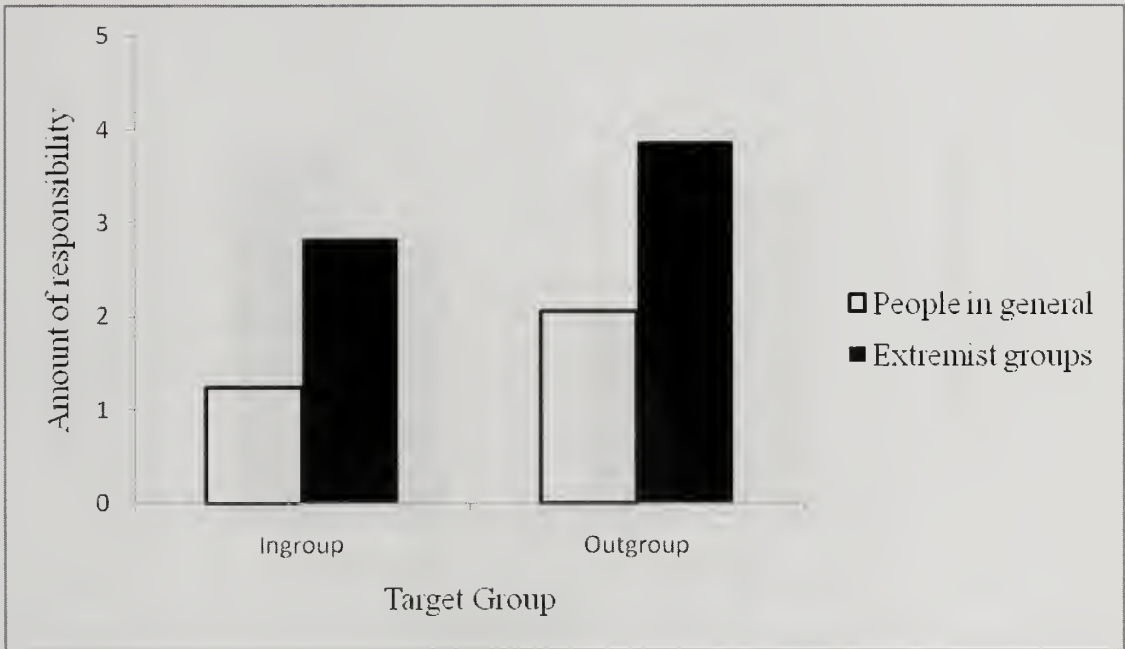




Figure 11. The Attributions of Responsibility as a Function of Type of Target (Extremists vs. People in General) and Type of Responsibility (Instigation vs. Consequences) Crossing over Ethnic Group Membership (Study 3).

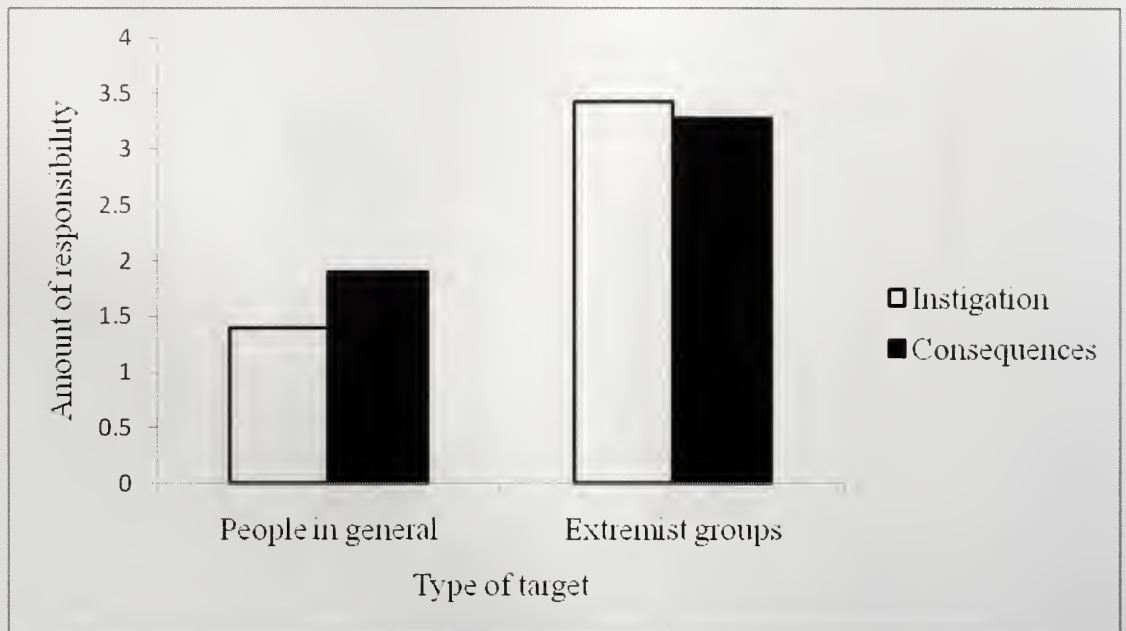


Figure 12. The Amount of Perceived Economic Harm as a Function of Ethnic Group Membership (Hutus vs. Tutsis) and Target Group (Ingroup vs. Outgroup) (Study 3).

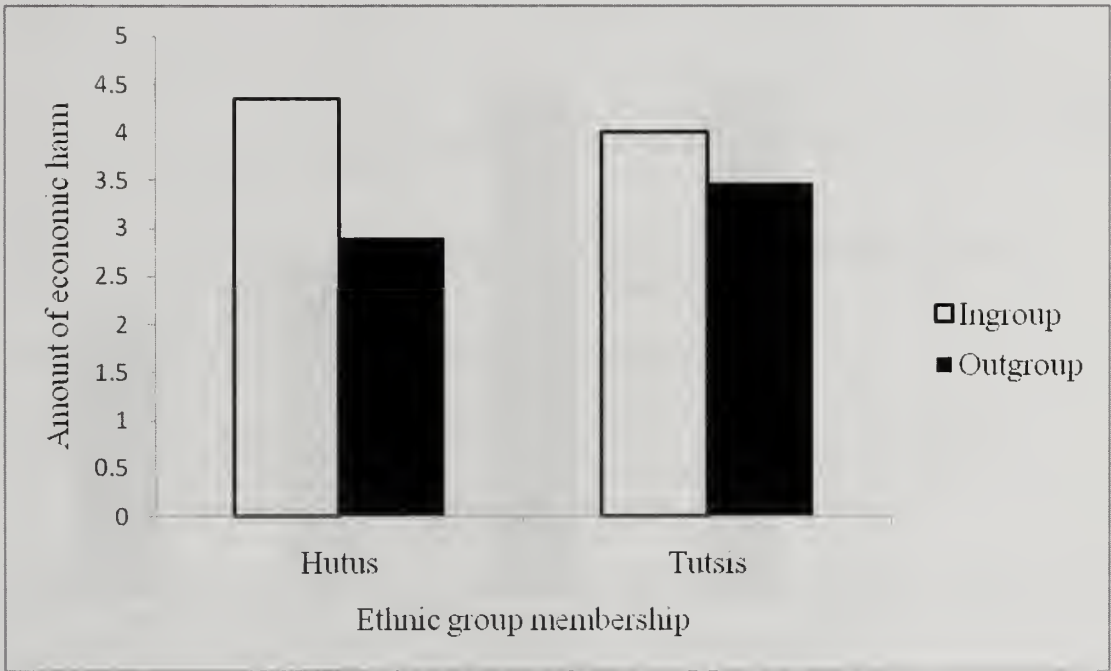
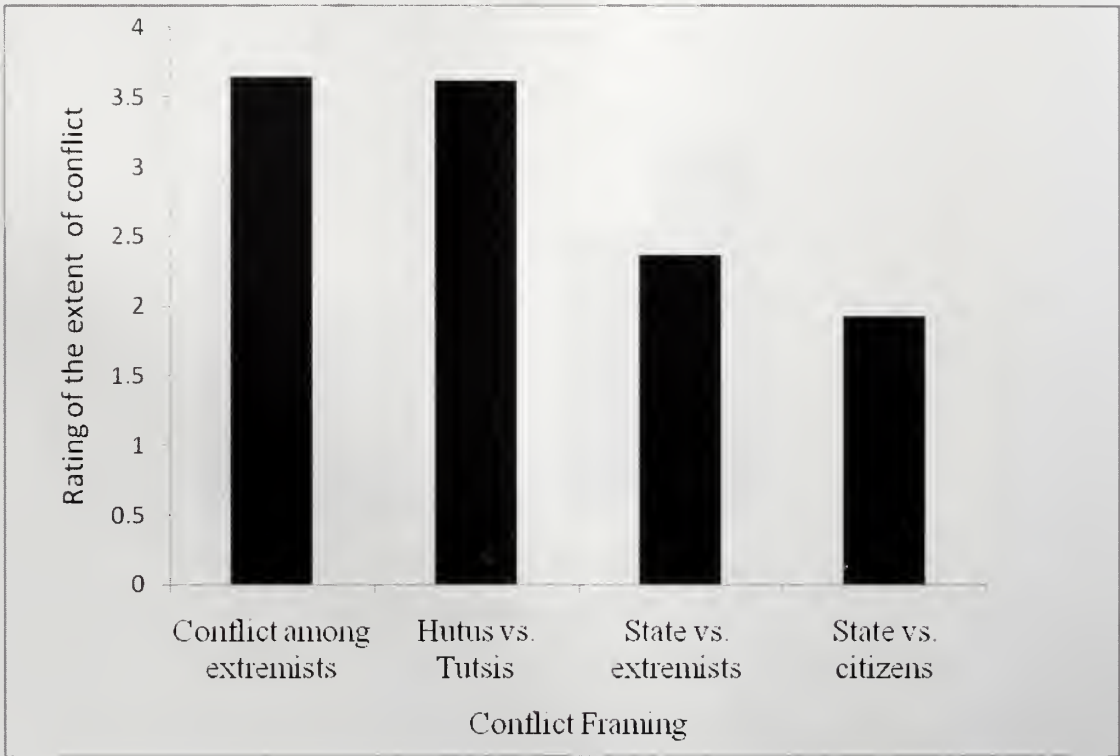


Figure 13. Mean Ratings of Perceived Conflict Framing of Respondents in Burundi, for Hutus and Tutsis Combined (Study 3).



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